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THE
PRIDE OF ANCESTRY:

OR,
WHO IS SHE?

A Novel.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY MRS. THOMSON,

AUTHOR OF

EXCESSIVE SENSIBILITY — FATAL FOLLIES —
THE LABYRINTHS OF LIFE — GERALDINE —
AND ROBERT AND ADELA, &c.

VOL. IV.

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THE
PRIDE OF ANCESTRY;

OR,

WHO IS SHE?

CHAPTER XXVI.

FATE had not done with persecuting the amiable Helen, for she had scarcely been a fortnight in Berkshire, before Lady Delmore received a letter, without signature, warning her Ladyship against imposition, saying, that the young woman who had passed herself upon her as her daughter, had no more title to her name, than she had to the estate from whence she had been obliged to retreat. The writer pledged him-

self to prove this assertion in a very few days, saying, that he was not without hopes of presenting to her Ladyship the real and undoubted Miss Delmore.

When this letter was read, it caused much emotion in her Ladyship, and great anxiety, as she well knew Miss Bellingham had never imposed upon her, or obtruded herself or her claims on her notice: on the other hand, that she had never been able to prevail on her, though repeatedly solicited to that purpose, to take the name of Delmore. In the greatest perplexity of mind, she sent for Mr. Gower, and putting the letter into his hand, told him, when he had perused it, to follow her into the garden. She would wait in the pavilion his coming.

Mr. Gower read and re-read the letter. It operated very differently on his mind, from what it had done on her

Lady-

Ladyship's. The bare probability that Miss Bellingham might be released from all relationship to the Delmore family, quite transported him with joy. He had himself never seen any real proof that she was the lost daughter of Lord Delmore, but if she was satisfied, in his station it did not become him to hazard any doubts, particularly as he would lose some part of the portion, assigned to him by Lord Delmore's will, should his daughter ever be found.

As he stood alone in the parlour, he repeated to himself more than once, it is possible I may call her mine at last. He was roused from this delightful thought, by the recollection that her Ladyship waited for his joining her in the pavilion.

In his way thither, he met the object of his every thought, who asked him what had pleased him so much? for his

countenance was a very expressive one, and was lighted up from the pleasant sensations that pervaded his imagination, that it might be his lot to possess her heart. He replied it was the first time in his life that he had indulged a pleasurable thought at her expence.—She playfully seized his arm, and insisted on knowing what this could mean. He refused to tell her then, but said, if she would give him her word of honour, not to refuse him the first request he should seriously make to her after the present meeting, he would, with Lady Delmore's permission, explain to her what he now alluded to.

She replied, that she had so firm a reliance on his making no request that would be improper for her to grant, that she did not hesitate, and laughing, she put her hand on her heart, and said, “I give my word of honour to grant
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the first request made to me by my good-for-nothing brother Philip Gower. There," said she, "you deserved the epithet I have given you, for being so mercenary to make terms for telling me a secret, that it seems concerns myself."

He thanked her for what she had done, and then hastened to Lady Delmore, who impatiently waited his coming.

She asked him what he thought of the letter. He told her that, in general, he had no opinion of such letters, but yet there might be something meant by this. He then requested a full information on what proofs her belief was founded of Miss Bellingham's being her daughter. She related fully every step she had taken in the matter. All the information she had founded her belief upon, amounted, in his opinion, to nothing, and in his own breast, he

could not but blame her Ladyship for her precipitation.

He then, for the first time, checked his unbounded joy, to think what a severe disappointment this last blow must occasion in the bosom of her, who now, more than ever, interested him. He then ventured to enquire on what her Ladyship determined. She said she thought it would be best to give some intimation to Miss Bellingham, in a slight manner, that it might not come abruptly upon her; for, if it was true, that she really was not her daughter, and the real child of Lord Delmore should come upon them suddenly, the shock might be more than she could bear. Her Ladyship lamented that Helen had been so capricious as not to accept the offered hand of Sir Harry Cleaveland, observing that she did not believe that he would now renew his
suit,

suit, at least not until the Holmby affair was determined.

Mr. Gower assured her Ladyship, that he did not believe Miss Bellingham would unite herself to Sir Harry, were she penniless. He thought it would be best to break the present affair to her as soon as possible, for the reasons assigned by her Ladyship. He undertook the task with her permission, promising that he would not defer it longer than the present evening. This was agreed on.

Lady Delmore now blamed herself for giving pain to an amiable young woman, and for raising hopes that were, perhaps, about to be crushed at the very worst time possible, as her affairs were now in their most unsettled state. However, she desired Mr. Gower to assure Miss Bellingham, however matters turned out, of her continued protection, and that she should consider her-

self as charged with her future provision in life. She begged the matter might remain between themselves a profound secret; as she should be ashamed of making another bustle where she might be again disappointed. Mr. Gower promised to observe all delicacy and secrecy in the affair.

After he quitted the pavilion, he began to reflect on what he had undertaken.—To destroy the last settled prospect of her, whose happiness was dearer to him, than any thing else in this world. It was true, Miss Bellingham possessed a dignity and firmness of mind, which he had observed, on a late occasion, with much admiration. The loss of fortune did not seem at all to affect her; but then she believed herself the daughter of a Nobleman, and heiress to his property. This last hope failing her, she might sink under
accumu-

accumulated disappointments. He had engaged to announce to her that she had no real dependance in life, and was to become again as nothing, related to no human being. This was a task indeed.

At dinner, when the family met, Helen could not but perceive that Lady Delmore's mind laboured to conceal some secret. She eat very little, and, soon after the desert was removed, she proposed to go, with Miss Ellis, to visit a sick neighbour, with whom Miss Bellingham was unacquainted.—“Philip,” said she, “will take an airing in the carriage with you, Julietta,” (never herself calling Miss Bellingham by the name of Helen) “or, if you prefer a walk, he will attend you.”

Mr. Gower replied, that they should find employment until their return.

Helen was greatly pleased with this arrangement, wanting to be made acquainted with his promised communication.

On Lady Delmore's taking leave of them, she kissed Miss Bellingham, adding that she hoped to meet her as cheerful on her return, as she then left her. This she promised, and Miss Ellis and her Ladyship walked through the shrubbery to the house of their friend.

After talking on indifferent subjects, Helen asked for the promised communication, which, if deferred, she would revoke her word of honour.

Mr. Gower replied, perhaps he had been rash in promising to communicate what might incur her everlasting displeasure. This she assured him could not be the case, for let it be what it would, she would rather hear it from him than any other person. This declaration

claration was so grateful to him, that he determined to make trial of her fortitude, at the present time, rather than, by delays, to risque her being abruptly surprized. She said that she knew that what he had to relate was of an unpleasant nature, by the countenance of Lady Delmore at quitting the house, but he need not to be afraid, for she could part with all her present hopes, without a sigh, while conscious of having not forfeited her own esteem, and that of those whom she had a value for.

“ You have heard from Holmby that Mr. Jeffreys has a right to Lady Levet’s property. This does not give me any uneasiness, nor would the loss of Lord Delmore’s fortune affect me, otherwise than to find myself a being, in whom no one took an interest.”— Here she burst into tears.

Mr. Gower assured her, that this could never be the case whilst he remained in existence, for that her happiness would always be as dear to him as his own. “Will you not be surprized,” said he, “when I tell you that the probability of circumstances happening, that might alter your relationship to this family, was the occasion of that change in my countenance, which you this morning noticed?”

She now entreated to be no longer kept in suspense, but that he would inform her of every circumstance. This he did with much caution and delicacy. She received the news with more composure than Mr. Gower thought was possible for any one in her situation; but not without being sensibly affected at being thus made the sport of fortune. She now blamed herself for not having attended to the advice of her good friend Mrs. Allright, and
have

have remained in her family until the packet of Lady Levet was opened.—The hope of having found, in Lady Delmore, an affectionate parent, aided by her Ladyship's assurances of being certain that she was her child, had betrayed her into her present situation, which was now extremely painful. She had now deprived herself of every natural home. To stay where she was, was impossible, when another who had a better right might arrive. She was sensible of Lady Delmore's kindness, in her assurances of future provision and protection, neither of which she would accept, if not entitled to receive them as a daughter of the family. She wept much to think how severely she was dealt with, and saw, that since she could not controul, she must submit to fate.

Every thing that the truest regard could suggest, was offered by Mr. Gower,

Gower, in alleviation of the blow given to her future hopes. Some of these arguments, it may be supposed, had their effect ; for, on Lady Delmore's return, Helen met her with much composure, at the same time assuring her, that her loss of fortune was the least felt of all her sorrows. Helen now proposed what had been advised by Mr. Gower, that she should spend the intervening month, previous to the general eclairsissement, with her friends, the Dallings, at Bentley Abbey.

Lady Delmore would not hear of this, saying, that it was impossible for her to allow of her leaving her house upon the suggestions of an anonymous correspondent. That whenever she received any further news or confirmation on this subject, she would consent to a temporary separation, but, for the present, she begged her to calm her mind, and remain with her, as the time
was

was so near, when she would be relieved from uncertainty as to the Holmby possessions.

Though this was not what she wished, Miss Bellingham consented to stay until they should hear further. It was evident that the present unsettled state of her affairs, preyed on her spirits, although she tried all in her power to appear cheerful in the presence of her friends, particularly when in the presence of Mr. Gower, whose own mind was ill at rest.

Two or three days passed on, and nothing more was heard of the writer of the letter, or of the arrival of the promised Miss Delmore. They began now to think that the letter might be a fabrication of some enemy of Helen's, who wished to add to the distress of the present momentous interval.

In the mean time, Helen received a letter from Mrs. Allright, to inform her
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that on the very day she left their house, a young lady, of the name of Hervey, had arrived at the Lodge, on a visit by invitation from herself. That she had been informed, by the Lawyer, that Miss Bellingham was no longer mistress there, but that she was welcome to a night's lodging if she chose, and that on her refusal, she had been grossly insulted, by both this man and the young fellow who pretended to be master of the house, and that but for the intervention of the old Steward, who directed the post-boy to the Grove, she would have been subjected to further impertinence. Mrs. Allright added, that as her husband was well acquainted with Mrs. Western, the Lady from whose house she had just come, he had given her an invitation to stay there, until she heard from Berkshire, where she presumed Miss Bellingham would wish her to remove.

This

This letter, at this time, greatly perplexed Helen: yet, to leave Miss Hervey situated as she was in the house of Mr. Allright, carried great impropriety on the face of it. She had certainly given an invitation to, and ought to have written an apology: but in the hurry and confusion of her spirits, she had totally forgotten Miss Hervey, as much as if she had never heard of her.

As soon as Lady Delmore heard of the subject of her embarrassment, she insisted on Helen's sending her own maid to Holmby, to conduct Miss Hervey into Berkshire, thinking that her society might enliven them a little, and take Miss Bellingham's attention from more serious thoughts.

All deliberation, as to propriety, was at an end; for in half an hour Mr. Allright's carriage stopped at the door, and Miss Marian Allright and Miss Hervey alighted, to the very great surprise

prize of the Ladies, who were at that moment, contesting the point, whether she should be sent for or not.

Miss Allright was in tears when she entered, as Miss Harvey also was. As soon as Miss Allright could speak, she said, "Oh! Miss Bellingham, you don't know the dreadful disaster that has befallen us. Frank has just fought a duel with that Mr. Jeffreys, and we believe he is mortally wounded."

Helen soon comprehended the whole matter.

Frank Allright had followed Miss Hervey to Carleton, believing that she would be at Holmby Lodge. On his arrival, the behaviour of Mr. Jeffreys to that young lady, had been related by his mother and sisters, with every exaggeration; they not knowing the interest he took in whatever concerned her. He instantly wrote to Mr. Jeffreys, reproaching him with his ungentlemanly

tlemanly conduct, and demanding that he should ask pardon of Miss Hervey publicly, or meet him and give him satisfaction for the insult. To this he returned no answer. When Frank wrote again to assure him, if he did not reply to that letter satisfactorily, he would come to the Lodge, and cane him in the face of the servants.

This produced an answer, desiring him to name time and place, and Mr. Jeffreys would not fail to meet him.

They met, and Mr. Jeffreys was believed to be mortally wounded.—Frank Allright set off directly for the Continent.

All this was carried on without any one of the family at the Grove hearing a word of the matter. The first intimation they had on the subject, was from the servants of the family, who had just met a man hurrying to the Lodge, with news of the duel. Mr. Jeffreys

Jeffreys was dead, and the other gentleman had gone off with all speed.

Miss Allright said her father was inconsolable at the dreadful affair, and had thought it proper that Miss Hervey should leave Carleton, and has she wished to see her friend, Mrs. Allright had sent her into Berkshire with her.

This news greatly affected Helen, who thought that the whole world conspired to vex and torment her. However, she felt for the situation of Miss Hervey, with whose attachments he was too well acquainted, not to pity her.

Lady Delmore was not acquainted with Miss Hervey's story, but considered her as an old friend of her daughter's, and therefore endeavoured to comfort her in the best manner possible.

Miss Marian Allright took some refreshment, and then returned directly, wishing to reach home again as soon as possible, every thing there being in the
great-

greatest confusion when she left it. She was not certain if her brother would get safe out of the kingdom, though it was very likely that he would do so, as no one in their village would pursue him, every one detesting Mr. Jeffreys for dispossessing Miss Bellingham, and now hoping, if he should die, (for he was not killed on the spot, as had been reported) that the young lady would return home again.

Miss Bellingham, when an opportunity offered, now informed Lady Delmore, of the true state of Miss Hervey's situation with regard to Frank Allright, and also her story, which had been related to her by himself.

Her Ladyship did not approve of the conduct of Miss Bellingham, in inviting to her house a young person who had entered into a clandestine courtship with the only son of her friend Mr.

All-

Allright, but as it was, she must not, with her present unfortunate circumstances, be neglected.

A few days afterwards, the postman brought a letter from Mrs. Allright, announcing the death of Mr. Jeffreys on that morning, and also another letter for Miss Hervey, from Mrs. Western, acquainting her, that James Norris was just arrived from America, and had been repeatedly at her house, telling them that if he could but be so happy as once again to behold her, he should be happy, as he had great and good news for her. That on this information, she had directed him to Carleton, where she sincerely hoped he would perform his promise, and make her happy.

She communicated this to Helen when they were alone, saying, that she must go instantly to London, as her
dear

dear father, who she had believed to have perished in America, was arrived, at the same time giving her the letter.

The name of Norris was too familiar to Helen to escape her observation. She let drop the paper, and flew down to Lady Delmore's dressing room, exclaiming, "She is found, I am sure she is."

"Who is found?" asked her Ladyship.

"Miss Delmore," replied Helen, "who face, at first sight, struck me with a likeness to the portrait of Lord Delmore."

At length she explained herself, mentioning that Miss Hervey had intimation of the arrival of James Norris from America, and that she at present believed him to be her father, but that this could not be, because that name she recollected to have been that of the person to whose care the mother of
Lady

Lady Delmore had intrusted her child to be nursed with. From the first time that she had been seen by Lady Delmore, she had recognized the likeness, but having before declared that Miss Bellingham so much resembled her deceased husband, she durst not trust to her own judgment ; besides, she did not then know Miss Hervey's story, nor the possibility of her being unacquainted with her parents. After much investigation, little doubt remained, that when James Norris arrived, (and a messenger was dispatched to meet him at Carleton and bring him to Miss Hervey) he would ascertain beyond a doubt to whom she belonged.

The next morning brought back the messenger, together with James Norris, who instantly was known by Miss Hervey, and who as instantly declared that she then was in the house of her father, where he had been seeking to conduct
he

her ever since his arrival in England.— He owned that the letter that Lady Delmore received, was written at his desire, having heard that some one had taken the name and place of his dear girl, who, until his arrival in England, he believed to have been lost, with her good friends Mr. and Mrs. Elton near the Isle of Wight, the news having been brought to America before he sailed. Having lost his wife, Mary Norris, he had resolved to return home and find out the family who had intrusted the child to his care, and relate to them his melancholy adventures, and also the fate of the dear child, whom he never hoped to behold again alive. He then related how by accident he had come to the knowledge of her being preserved. That he had put an advertisement in the paper, describing her, and that this had had the effect ; for that a young gentlewoman had answered it, and ad-

vised him to write the letter which Lady Delmore had received a few days before.

They found the young gentlewoman was one of the Miss Westerns, who did not believe, at the time, that Miss Hervey would be found really to be Lady Delmore's daughter, but that she should create some confusion, and hopes in the breast of Miss Hervey, that might end in that lady's mortification.

That Helen had no right to Lord Delmore's fortune, was established beyond a doubt by James Norris, who produced sufficient proofs to authenticate his assertions, even in a court of law, if it had been necessary to resort to this resource : but her claim was admitted by every one, and Helen most joyfully relinquished all title to relationship with this family, in favour of her in whom she had taken more than a common interest.

No

No one was made more happy by this change than Mr. Gower. He soon assumed a more tender tone of behaviour, than would have been compatible with the relationship in which he believed himself to stand with regard to Helen. He took an opportunity, when left alone with her, to remind her of her word of honour, solemnly given, as he said (though in truth it was no such thing) that she would grant his first request. She instantly recollected to what he alluded, and said, that it was given to her brother, and as he did not now stand in that relation, she did not know but she might get absolution. However, if his request was not a very unreasonable one, perhaps she might be induced to stand upon her honour with him.

He then first pleaded his affection for her, long before any relationship had been urged in bar of his declaring himself.

self. Then the great disparity of their fortunes prevented him; afterwards he was forced to check all hopes, from the supposed ties of consanguinity; but now she must pardon him, these ties being dissolved, if he presumed to request her to give him a nearer and a dearer title, to assert her rights, and become her protector for life. He then sat before her his fortune, which was not more than a few hundreds a year, above what arose from his commission in the Navy. He said he was the more urgent on this subject, that she stood now in an unpleasant and awkward predicament, and needed to be relieved from this as soon as possible, or he should not, at such a crisis, have obtruded himself on her, even to exact her word of honour given.

Helen, whose heart was all frankness and generosity, saw the extreme delicacy of him, who had ever been in possession

sion of her heart, though she durst not own this to herself. This had, in a great measure, reconciled her to the loss of the Delmore connection and fortune. And now, having no plea to urge, to discourage Mr. Gower, she replied to him, that her word being passed, she would not revoke it, and he was at liberty to apply to Dr. Jackson and Mrs. Allright, without whose consent she could not marry, before the specified time for the opening of the packet. If they did not object, and he would take the hand of an unfortunate like herself, it was his.

Mr. Gower had mentioned this to Lady Delmore, who was delighted with the prospect of still retaining her beloved Helen in the family, and now joined Mr. Gower in a letter, requesting the consent of the guardians for the union taking place immediately.

Dr. Jackson and Mrs. Allright could not disapprove of the choice of Miss Bellingham. They only requested her, as the matter was so soon to come to an issue, to wait until she should be at liberty to choose for herself, and they discharged from any responsibility.

This answer did not please Mr. Gower. He entreated that Miss Bellingham would allow him privately to be married to her, so that whatever might be the event of the packet, he should be entitled to act for her.

She consented to this request, and they were married by a particular friend of Lady Delmore's, who was herself present, when she had the pleasure again to hail Helen as her beloved daughter. She having always called Mr. Gower her son, in compliment to Lord Delmore, whilst he was living, and continued it ever after.

Mrs.

Mrs. Gower was now perfectly happy, nor did she once think it long until the opening of the packet. She knew that whatever turn affairs took, she must possess some property that Mr. Jeffreys could not claim.

The time imperceptibly wore away, and the important day arrived when all doubt was to be at an end.

Lady Delmore was invited, as was also Mr. Gower, to accompany Miss Bellingham to the Grove House, at Carleton, where the packet was to be opened in the presence of them all.—The invitation was accepted, and they arrived at Mr. Allright's about twelve o'clock, when they were met by Dr. Jackson and Mr. Rackrent, and immediately proceeded to business.

Mrs. Gower was exceedingly agitated when the important packet was produced by Dr. Jackson, and he proceeded

to break the seal. This done, he took off one cover, and then read as follows :

“ Before this reaches your ear, the hand that writes it will be crumbled in dust, and she who addresses you, will; I hope, be forgiven, the painful uncertainty that you have suffered through that pride which was unconquerable, and for which, I hope, to have made all the amends possible, when I declare you to be my own Niece, daughter of a beloved sister, the fruit of an unfortunate marriage, who died in giving you birth; before which time, no one of her own family was made acquainted with her imprudence. On her death bed, she entrusted me with the certificate of her marriage, which you will find accompanying this declaration. We were on a journey, when

when my sister was taken ill, and, from her situation, forced to entrust me with the secret, that she had degraded herself so far as to have made a marriage with a person in trade, the nephew of Sir Giles Jeffreys, a ridiculous man who resided in our neighbourhood.— She requested that her husband might be sent for. This I could not allow, and in a few hours my poor sister breathed her last, leaving you to my care and protection. Our servant that attended us, being dispatched home with the news of my sister's illness, I determined to bribe the doctor, who attended, to secrecy, and also the mistress of the house, who engaged to procure a person who should take the child, and ask no farther questions; luckily for me, they both died soon after. You was given to the care of one Mary Norris, who had already a child whose parents wished for concealment. I

returned home, my father being under confinement with a fit of the gout, and saying nothing of the degradation our family had undergone, I gave out that my sister had died of a complaint to which she was frequently subjected.

“ I wrote to Mr. Jeffreys, the person she had married, and told him that the child died with its parent, recommending him to silence on the subject of his marriage, if he did not wish his unhappy wife’s memory to be loaded with the curses of an offended father, who at present knew not her errors.

“ I received no answer. I heard that he was seen attending the funeral of my sister, but that the day after he left the village, where he has never since been heard of. I have heard he went to the Indies, but am inclined to think him dead, as he has never been heard of by his uncle, (who is with his
wife

wife now no more) since he left Carleton.

“ My property, therefore, I have willed to you as the rightful heir to your mother, and as some reparation for the state of suspense in which you have been kept. I could not condescend sooner to sully a long line of ancestry, by a declaration so degrading, as that a man in trade was united to a Levite. You will not feel this as I have done, and may yet be happy in being acknowledged by a family that I can not think of but with abhorrence. May you, my child, live to atone for your mother's crime, by marrying a man of rank, such as you are by your fortune entitled to expect may offer you his hand. However, I lay you under no restrictions: be virtuous, and be happy, and if you cannot forgive, forget her who subscribes herself your Affectionate Aunt, Eleanor Levite.”

“ And now,” said Dr. Jackson, “ I will congratulate you, my dear young lady, on having attained a most honourable rank in society. I must declare that you are worthy of such parents; for I remember your father, and revere the memory of your excellent mother.”

Every one now pressed forward to offer their congratulations. None were so grateful to Mrs. Gower, as the offered hand of her husband, which she took, and putting it within that of Dr. Jackson's, said, “ Will you forgive me, dear Sir, if I, at this happy moment, declare that I have acted in disobedience to your's and Mrs. Allright's wishes, in giving my dear Philip the title of husband, before this explanation.”

The Doctor declared, that he was too happy to enter into any dispute ;
and

and he could answer for Mrs. Allright, also, on the present occasion.

It was now determined to repair to the Lodge and spend the day, if not in festivity (this being improper, considering the late melancholy fate of Mrs. Gower's brother) yet in happiness and content.

It was in vain to attempt any restraint on the joy of every rank of persons in the village on the occasion, as soon as it was known that Helen was the daughter of their revered and amiable benefactress, whose memory was dear to all. Even the children who were unborn when she died, had learnt the many virtues she possessed, by hearing their parents relate them in contrast to her sister, who was never known to do an act of benevolence. However, they began to be reconciled even to her, now that she had done justice to her, in whom they contemplated a revival

val of times past. One merry peal was insisted on, and heartily rung; after which, the ringers, accompanied by nearly every inhabitant of Carleton, and headed by the good old grey-headed Steward, who wept for joy at the happy turn of affairs, repaired to the Lodge, and after giving three cheers to the future happiness of their Lady and her spouse, retired to an inn in the village, where a good supper and a guinea was given to all who claimed it.

CHAP. XXVII.

MATTERS having taken this favourable turn, Frank Allright was soon apprized of his good luck, as Mrs. Gower was too well acquainted with the disposition and insolent manners of her brother, to enter any suit against her friend, Mr. Allright, as she could not but acknowledge, though she lamented in the fate of her brother, that it had been justly deserved.

On his return from the Continent, he became greatly embarrassed how he was to appear before his father, of whose resentment he was well assured.

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But the old gentleman's wrath was greatly abated, by a circumstance with which Frank himself was unacquainted. This was, that it was more than probable he might at last get an heiress whose fortune might come into the bank in St. Mary Axe.

On his arrival in town he was made acquainted with the fate of his beloved Miss Hervey, at which he sincerely rejoiced. Independently of the advantages of fortune, which he hoped might one day be his, for he did not doubt of his having an interest in the breast of Miss Delmore, and that her altered state would never be felt by him. Under this conviction, before he addressed a line to any of his own family, he sat down to enquire after her who was in his thoughts the first object.

“ *To Miss Delmore.*”

“ That Miss Delmore in my absence has found a protector and parent, is a subject of great satisfaction to me ; as I will allow the impropriety of attentions from a single man, such as myself, though I rejoice in the opportunity that made me a witness of the delicacy that shrunk from even the imputations of malice. I will own a small share of vanity to you when I say, that I believe this sacrifice to public opinion was not made without a struggle, and that I still retained a share of your thoughts in absence. I will own that you was never for a moment absent from my mind. Now perhaps fate may place an insuperable bar to my hopes ; if so, though I cannot regret that we ever met, yet if you are happy I must endeavour to be resigned, and if possible, satisfied with your good wishes. These without vanity

nity I think and believe I may reckon on, and in this case they will be the only good I shall possess, when another shall gain that heart which to me would alone have been an invaluable possession. I beg your excuse and pardon for thus intruding upon time that may be dedicated to a more agreeable use. I only meant to congratulate you on the acquisition of friends and fortune, and to beg to be numbered amongst the former. I also wished to say how happy I was made on my return, by the happy termination of Miss Bellingham's affairs, in the explanation of the will of Lady Levet, and in her marriage with Mr. Gower. A more brave or accomplished gentleman I do not know, or one more deserving of her for whom next to yourself I possess the highest esteem.

“ I am but just arrived from the continent. I called on Mrs. Western before I went home, and there heard from
that

that most excellent woman, news that agitated me so much that she would not let me leave her. I will not tell you all the extravagancies I committed ; we laughed and cried together, and dined also together. She told me that she was to set out to-morrow morning for Berkshire, and offered to be the bearer of a few lines ; so, instantly on reaching home, I began to scribble, and I believe that I should continue to do so, if my friend Delaney was not waiting for me in the next room, and remonstrating through the wainscot that his sister will have done supper before we reach her house. Thither he declares I must go, for as I have been to France, she will die if I don't go and tell her the fashions ; with which however I am totally unacquainted. Billy will have no denial, so I must exercise my genius in the inventive style. I have already almost persuaded
him

him into a green hat ; so don't wonder if ever you should chance to see him again, if he exhibits himself in my fashion.

“ To-morrow I go to Carleton. I dare not request or hope for a line, just to say that Frank Allright lives in your remembrance, and that he still holds his rank amongst your friends. I beg my respectful regards to Lady Delmore, to whom I was introduced by Mrs. Gower, and also to say, I congratulate her on having found in you so good a substitute for the loss of hers.

“ Adieu, my amiable and beloved friend. Think of me often, as I shall of you, and reckon the few hours passed in your society, among those most precious in the existence of him who will still subscribe himself always and unalterably yours,

FRANCIS ALLRIGHT.”

After

After having spent a sleepless night, Frank set off for Carleton under great apprehensions as to his reception when he should arrive. He knew that he should find good advocates in Mr. and Mrs. Gower, and in their friendship he placed much reliance. Gower he knew was related to the Delmore family, and would assist him in bringing about a union, without which life would be to him a mere blank.

On his arrival at the Grove, he was so lucky as to find the family at the Lodge at dinner with his mother. His reception was beyond his expectation; his father shook him heartily by the hand. Nothing was said in allusion to the duel, in compliment to the guests; but both Mr. and Mrs. Gower evinced, by their looks and conversation, that they retained no enmity towards him. Mrs. Gower had witnessed, in her own person, the brutal and ungentlemanly conduct

duct of her brother, so that she could easily judge that he had provoked the fate he had met, and though she could not but be sorry for the accident, and the consequent disappointment her father would experience, yet she in her heart forgave Frank, and hoped to bring about a union in time betwixt Miss Delmore and himself.

Mr. and Mrs. Gower were now extremely anxious for the arrival of Mr. Jeffreys, which was by this time daily expected ; whenever this event happened, they determined to go to London, as the scene they were now in, was too big with painful recollections, to admit of a possibility of his visiting them until time, that softens down all afflictions, should have operated as a balm to his mind. They determined to spend the intermediate time in making a visit to Lady Delmore, and after Mr. Jeffreys and his Lady arrived, should they approve,

approve, a visit to the Dallings was intended.

Many reasons induced Mrs. Gower to wish to quit Carleton for a short time ; but none more than to effect, if possible, a union between her two young friends, though this she knew would be opposed by Lady Delmore, who wished her daughter to make a fashionable match.

Mrs. Allright, she could see, was far from being happy ; and though this might have been expected, yet Mrs. Gower was greatly hurt to witness the many disagreeable bickerings that passed between every branch of the family, and their mother-in-law. The Alderman treated her with great indifference, and frequently with less respect than he did his old housekeeper, giving her frequent hints that she had played her cards with great finesse, and success too, he would add ; for he could not forget
her

her concealment of the Delmore affair, until they were married. This would most certainly never have taken place, had the good Banker been fully acquainted with the true state of affairs. Mrs. Allright herself, would not have married so precipitately had she known how matters were to turn out ; and now that she had both leisure and cause to regret, she could not remedy the evil.

The Alderman's whole attention was now fixed upon his son Frank's being able to marry her, whom but a few months ago he would have rejected with scorn. His daughters often told him this, but he answered them, that every prudent man's opinions ought to change with a change of circumstances ; that he had had no objections to the girl, but many to her want of money. This not now being the case, why the connection was desirable. Miss Marian asked her father

ther

ther if he had not better wait, lest any other daughter might appear to turn out the present one. " Perhaps papa some poor parish girl may come to Frank's lot at last, if Lady Delmore should acknowledge such a one." The old Banker was angry at the sarcastick remarks of both his daughters, and said, " it was time he interfered to match his son, as he saw no one, gentle or simple, in haste to take his daughters off his hand, though he had exhibited them at all the fashionable markets in town and country.—Men grew wiser every day, and if they were not content to take citizens, they would be long enough without husbands. Why there is your sister Clifden ! A pretty example she is. It was but yesterday I was fool enough to pay a hundred pounds for her or she would have been turned out of her house. She talked of coming here for a few weeks, and it was to prevent

this that I advanced the cash. I have too many females here already."

This he said looking his wife full in the face. She replied.

"Yes, Mr. Allright, I am too late sensible of this," and left the room in tears. Thus ended a conversation displeasing to all parties.

Mrs. Gower calling on Mrs. Allright, found her in her own room, drowned in tears. She said all in her power to soothe her; but it is not easy to administer comfort to a mind diseased. Since circumstances could not be changed, Mrs. Gower proposed, that Mrs. Allright should make one of their intended party to Bentley Abbey, from which place she had just received a letter full of complaints. Mrs. Dalling could not endure the country, and unless Mrs. Gower would promise her a speedy visit, she must come to town, as Dalling
was,

was, she said, a perfect humdrum, and not bearable without company. Besides, he had taken the liberty to object to some of her visitors; particularly to the Duke of Denbigh, who was universally admired, and who was the life of every society. But Mrs. Dalling said, that she perceived, that when Mr. Dalling married her, he intended her to fill the place of an upper servant, to superintend and keep the house in order, to hire and discharge the servants, to attend the nursery, and to see that the beds were well aired when company came ; which was to be about once or twice in a year: for which trouble she was to be rewarded by sitting at the head of his table, and carving for all the clowns he chose to invite. She had ventured to remonstrate against this, to assure him that she knew her place in society, and that she should not be informed by any one,

what she should, or what she should not do.

By this, and some former letters, Mrs. Gower could perceive that Mrs. Dalling was acting in direct opposition to both her happiness and interest. She lamented that Mr. Dalling's estate was so far removed from Carleton; for she thought that were his wife nearer to her, she might be able to convince her, that what constituted her husband's comfort, ought to be her sole and only aim. Home once rendered uncomfortable, is a source of continual vexation, and leads to many mischiefs, incalculable but certain.

Mrs. Gower had written on this subject to Mrs. Dalling's mother, requesting her to advise her daughter to think, ere thought was useless, but she returned for answer, that Caroline was not to be advised by her, as, whenever she

she had spoken on the subject, her reply was, that she was not acquainted with what was proper for a woman of fashion.

Every report Mrs. Gower heard of the conduct of her friend, served to fix her determination to hasten to Bentley Abbey; but this was impossible until Mr. Jeffreys arrived, as her duty to her only surviving parent, was paramount to all other considerations.

Mrs. Allright had no objections to make to the proposed visit, if her husband approved. She promised to acquaint Mrs. Gower the next day, and also, that she would not suffer her spirits to sink, but, for her sake, endeavour to bear with the humours of her husband, who, though an odd, was not a bad man.

Mrs. Gower, on her return home, wrote a few lines to Lady Delmore,

saying, that they proposed setting out in two days for Berkshire, there to await the arrival of her beloved, though as yet unknown, parent.

The receipt of this letter communicated much joy to all the family, as Mrs. Gower, in her short residence with Lady Delmore, had gained the good will and wishes of all ranks, in either the house or neighbourhood. As soon as it was known that she was arrived, congratulations poured in from all quarters; for when she left them, her marriage had not been publickly announced, nor was she certain what would be the result of the opening of Lady Levet's will.

Lady Delmore and her daughter received her most affectionately, particularly the latter lady, who had concieved a friendship for her from their first meeting. This was founded on a great similarity of disposition. Miss Delmore

was

was particularly glad, at the present period, to see her friend ; for since her residence in Berkshire, Lady Delmore had spoken to her of many families into which she would be glad to see her transplanted, and had named one whom she had never seen, as a person to whom she hoped her daughter would pay particular attention, should he, as was very likely, make her an offer.

Mrs. Gower was highly entertained to find this gentleman was no other than her old admirer, Sir Harry Cleaveland.

Lady Bell Dawson, (now that Miss Delmore's right was incontrovertibly established), had written to her beloved friend Lady Delmore, to propose, with her approbation, that her brother should make a visit, together with herself, into Berkshire, in order, as she said, to facilitate the first wish of her heart, a

union betwixt the families, which had before been prevented by the folly of that young woman, who, she found, had since thrown herself away on a mere beggar.

Mrs. Gower smiled as she read the last sentence. "Poor Philip," said she, "thy riches will not pass current in the circles that Lady Bell frequents, but I hope thy worth will be acknowledged by better judges than her Ladyship." She then related the courtship of Sir Harry to herself, and how glad she was to be rid of his silly conversation. "I should not say so, my dear Miss Delmore, if there was a possibility of your giving him a preference to an amiable young friend of mine, whose cause, were it necessary, I should endeavour to plead, but your blushes tell me, he has a better and a more constant advocate than myself."

Miss

Miss Delmore owned a decided partiality to young Allright above any other of his sex, declaring, that should Lady Delmore withhold her consent to their union, she would remain single for life, rather than marry any other. She shewed Mrs. Gower a letter she had received from Frank, which was the one he wrote before he went to Carleton.

Mrs. Gower promised to speak to Lady Delmore on the subject, and to engage Mr. Gower to do the same, saying, that she did not doubt but she would be brought to acknowledge the claims of Mr. Allright, who had, in her deserted and defenceless state, not only protected her himself, and procured her the friendship and protection of Mrs. Western and her sister, but had since risked his life for her. Besides, Lady Delmore was under a mistake, as to the circumstances of Sir Harry Cleaveland,

land, who was in want of Miss Delmore's fortune, to pay off innumerable mortgages on his estate.

The very first opportunity, the amiable Mr. and Mrs. Gower performed what they had undertaken, but were not able then to accomplish what they had flattered themselves they should.—Lady Delmore owned, that her daughter and herself were under great obligations to Mr. Allright, but said, that the connexion was not an eligible one. She then mentioned the improprieties of Lady Clifden and her Lord. These she said were enough to deter any prudent mother from letting a daughter, for whom she had any value, enter into their family, if she had no other objections. But she had others: Mr. Allright might be rich and able to place his son in opulence; but to what family did he himself belong? he had risen from obscurity; and though this was
cer-

certainly not blameable, yet he ought to match his children amongst the rich people of trade, who were always thrusting their sons and daughters in the face of Nobility, which was, indeed, intolerable. She begged them not to encourage Miss Delmore in the hopes of her ever consenting to such an union; for she had other views for her, if she should refuse Sir Harry Cleaveland.

Mrs. Gower was greatly hurt to find such opposition to the happiness of her young friends; as Lady Delmore seemed to have decided against the Allright family, so strongly, that it seemed hardly possible that she should change her mind:

Miss Delmore now wished that she had continued in her obscure state, since fortune could to her be productive only of misery. She determined to answer the letter Frank had

60 THE PRIDE OF ANCESTRY; OR,
addressed to her, though not without
first asking her mother's permission.

Not without much opposition, did she obtain leave to write to Carleton. Indeed, she would not have obtained her Ladyship's consent, had she not found, that at all events, her daughter considered herself bound in gratitude, not to neglect answering his friendly and affectionate letter.

Lady Delmore wished her daughter to marry a relation of her own; therefore she would not hear of a union with the Allright family.

After a fortnight spent in Berkshire, news arrived that Mr. Jeffreys was at his Agent's in town, who had informed him of the untimely end of his son. He was greatly affected at the news of his death; which somewhat damped the extreme joy he would otherwise have felt at finding that he had still a daughter left
to

to inherit his wealth, amiable as her mother.

Mrs. Jeffreys was inconsolable for the loss of her son, nor would she be comforted. The noise and bustle of London ill-suited the tone of her spirits; therefore her husband proposed going down to Northamptonshire, to visit his aged parents, who were both alive though stricken in years. He had alway remitted a few hundred pounds to his father annually, to make him comfortable in his old age, and particularly to keep a Curate, not on the usual pitiful terms, but somewhat liberally. This sum he intended to increase. He wrote a most fatherly and affectionate letter to Mrs. Gower, requesting that she and her husband would meet him, appointing the day, at an inn not far from Northampton, that he might have the pleasure of embracing them, and also of presenting them

them to his present Lady, before he saw his own parents : after which, he proposed, that they should all proceed together to the Vicarage House.

This summons was highly grateful to Mrs. Gower. She was overwhelmed with joy, not only at the prospect of seeing a parent, but of finding that her grandfather and grandmother were still alive. She had but one other wish on earth, and this was, that her mother could have been of this happy family party.

On the day proposed, the two families met, and mingled tears with their embraces. Never was any one so totally overpowered with joy as Mrs. Gower.

Mrs. Jeffreys seemed for a while to lay aside her own melancholy, in the contemplation of the happiness of her husband, and son and daughter-in-law, yet she could not but recur to past times,

times, when she herself was happy in a child, and also regretted that he was not herè to render their present joy complete.

Here it becomes proper to give some account of Mr. Jeffreys, his family, and fortune.

CHAP. XXVIII.

IT has very justly been questioned, whether the necessity of labour, by giving good health and spirits, and furnishing a constant object of attention to the mind, is not, at least, as happy a condition of life, as that of wealth, affluence, and what is commonly called, and considered, though falsely, as independence. A large fortune opens, indeed, various sources of enjoyment, beyond the mere gratifications of sense, to a cultivated and generous mind. But what new pleasures can the greatest riches afford to the vulgar, sensual, and selfish

selfish soul, beyond the necessities and comforts of life, easily within the reach of a moderate or middling fortune: the common motive that actuates the industrious citizen or tradesman to perseverance in the drudgery of business, is the hope of quiet, ease, and a thousand unknown pleasures at last, after their accumulations have swelled to the amount of their wishes. But they, for the most part, arrive at the possession of wealth, without being instructed in the methods of enjoying, in an elegant recess, rational felicity. From the want of a competent cultivation of their understanding, in the season of youth, they have no conception of the enjoyments to be derived from expanded views. They are ignorant even of their ignorance. They know of nothing that is excellent, respectable, or desirable besides wealth, and perhaps a title. Not that they entertain any just sentiments

ments concerning nobility, but because they fancy it will be the means of raising them to notice and distinction. At bottom they have a contempt for all pretences to consequence that are not founded on a pecuniary basis. They have all the pride of aristocracy without any of its virtues; whence their deportment to those who are on no parity with themselves in that important article, so frequently supercilious and offensive. To this class of mortals belonged Sir Giles Jeffreys, who had, in the course of forty year's drudgery in a haberdasher's shop, acquired a fortune of fifty thousand pounds, attained the dignity of Lord Mayor of London, and, on occasion of presenting a congratulatory address to his Majesty, received the honor of knighthood. The acceptance of that honour had been declined by most of the sheriffs of counties, and even most of the first magistrates of cities,

ties, but it was eagerly accepted by Giles Jeffreys, who, as well as his wife, was firmly persuaded that it would redound, not only to his honor, but be attended with some unknown feelings and sensations of pleasure and delight, of which they could not, without experience, form any conception.

He never spoke to his spouse without calling her my Lady, nor she to him without giving him the title of Sir Giles. This etiquette was not confined to the shop and dining-room, but carried even into the bed-chamber.

A house was now taken at the west end of the town, in Upper Berkeley-street, and the immediate charge of the shop committed to the management of a trusty foreman.

The Knight and his Lady thought it incumbent on them, on the occasion of their new dignity, to give a great entertainment, in their new house, to
their

their friends. The company was numerous, and the feast, though not remarkable for variety and elegance, most abundant.

Lady Jeffreys, who had never been accustomed to imagine that any thing in the way of feasting could possibly excel roast-beef and plumb-pudding, a goose, a turkey, fowls and ham, and a roasted pig, fixed immediately on these savoury and nutritious viands as the component articles of the entertainment. But on recollecting the immense number of visitors that were to partake of it, she apprehended that all this might not be enough ; some addition would be proper, but what that addition should be, was the question, and puzzled her greatly, when a lucky thought struck Sir Giles.

“ Lady Giles,” said he, “ don’t vex yourself ; the business may be settled in a trice : let there be two sirloins of beef, two
two

two plumb puddings, two turkeys, two hams, two geese, and two roasted pigs; one at the head of the table, and one at the bottom."

His arrangement was adopted; an unusual degree of symmetry prevailed throughout the whole. The battle of eating, for such, considering the clattering and the corruscations of knives and forks, it might be called, was hot and long continued. Oceans of punch and port followed, and every one was obliged to sing a song, or tell a tale.

The company parted at nine o'clock; but Sir Giles, after all, forgetting for a while his rank and title, could not be satisfied without going to the ale-house to his club, to hear the news, and smoke a pipe of tobacco. As he walked home, about twelve, he had many thoughts about the propriety or impropriety of his conduct, in going, after his new dignity, to a club of tradesmen.

men. Similar reflections had occupied the mind of Lady Giles. At breakfast, next morning, they canvassed the matter together. The result of their deliberations was, that he had acted very unsuitably to his rank, and it was determined that he should never so much as once enter the club-room in future. For some days, accordingly, he staid away, but not knowing how to kill time, he gradually relapsed into his former habits.

For the first hour, his old companions would now and then address him by his new title; but in the course of prolonged conviviality, they would either forget, or deliberately lay aside this formality, and call him Jeffreys, or, at best, Mr. Jeffreys. The knight himself would sometimes not be displeased with this, but, at others, he would recollect his dignity, and put on airs of reserve and haughtiness.

His

His companions observing this, commonly laughed at him, and some of them went the length of observing, that no *gentleman* now accepted such knight-hoods as those offered on congratulatory addresses to the throne. *Margaret Nicholson's* knights, as addressing knights were commonly called, had now become subjects of ridicule.

While Sir Giles was thus, from the malicious waggery of his old companions, cruelly disappointed of the respect and honour which he had confidently expected to derive from his new title, Lady Jeffreys underwent equal, if not greater mortifications from the keener and more spiteful envy of the female sex.

Though she had, for several years, laid aside the laudable custom of now and then assisting at the shop, some city ladies recollecting, or being informed that she had done so formerly,
would

would call on pretence of wanting this or that, and desire to see Mrs. Jeffreys. “ Lady Jeffreys, madam, don’t live here, but at the west end of the town; nor was she in the habit of coming even to the shop when she did; but whatever you please to want, ma’am, your commands shall be readily and cheerfully obeyed all the same.”

“ You are very good, sir, but, concerning the things I want, I wished to speak with, and consult your mistress.”

It would be endless, and serve no purpose, to enumerate the different modes and ways in which the city ladies and misses contrived to mortify both Lady Jeffreys and her daughters.

As to the ladies in the neighbourhood of Portman-square, she remained as she had been before, utterly unacquainted with them.

At length Sir Giles and Lady Jeffreys, finding that all they derived from their
new

new dignity in London, was only to be ridiculed and roasted, determined to quit business, which they could extremely well afford to do, and to retire to the country; where they might expect to receive more civility and respect from *real gentlemen* and squires, who knew better manners than the Londoners, who were very apt to be saucy.

Mr. (now Sir Giles) Jeffreys, whose father rented a small farm in Kent, had received his bent towards the trade he had followed in London from one of those accidental circumstances that commonly determine youth in the choice of business or professions, and which sometimes involve not only the fate of individuals, but of nations.

In his native village there was a chandler's shop, to which, when a boy, he very frequently resorted, and in which, being a sharp and steady lad, he

sometimes assisted in serving the customers.

At school, in the same village, he shewed no great inclination to books, but he acquired an excellent hand at writing, and a great readiness in cyphering. He employed his little stock of pence and halfpence in trading with his school-fellows, the greater part of whose small pocket-money centered in the pocket of Giles Jeffreys.

His only brother, whose name was James, was a boy of quite a different disposition; he not only delighted in books, but discovered great sensibility to the beauties of nature. He eagerly grasped at any book that fell in his way, relating to natural history and geography, when he was only twelve or thirteen years of age, and he was, withal, of a mild and humane disposition. The vicar of the parish, being a good and conscientious pastor, as well as an ingenious

genious man, was in the constant habit of visiting the school.

Being struck with what he observed, and was informed by the school-master concerning James Jeffreys, he earnestly recommended to his parents, who were very worthy and well-disposed people, to bring him up to the church. With the assistance of his maternal uncle, who had acquired a tolerably independent fortune for a ship's captain; he was sent not only to a very reputable Greek and Latin school, but from thence to one of the universities, where he took the degree of Batchelor. Through the friendship of a young nobleman, a fellow-student, he was preferred to a small church living in Northamptonshire, which was barely sufficient to afford the necessaries of life. He married, and on this very scanty income, together with the returns of a private school for a select number of

pupils, he brought up a family, not only with decency, but with a degree of gentility scarcely to be conceived by those who have not attended to, or had occasion to observe the mighty and extensive power of pure, genuine, and mutual love, which displays itself without a murmur, and even with satisfaction and joy, in the most persevering industry and vigilance, the strictest economy, and every virtue.

He had no reason to prize the ecclesiastical line of life himself, as advantageous in respect of worldly gain and comfort, yet as even a very moderate living was a security against absolute want, and those mean vices and artifices to which a young man is exposed by a course of traffic, and even by the practice of some professions accounted liberal, as it afforded leisure for study; and, above all, as it naturally invited to the contemplation of objects the
most

most sublime and interesting to mankind. On some small and uncertain hopes which he was induced to entertain, that his eldest son, who was a boy of very promising parts, as well as of a benignant and placid disposition, would not want preferment in the church, he trained him up along with the other private pupils, who were educated in his house, and by himself in the study not only of the Greek and Latin classics, but in mathematics, geography, the outlines of natural and civil history, and other accomplishments. He had expected to have obtained a scholarship for him at Oxford; but the unexpected and sudden death of the friend on whom he relied for so considerable a benefit, deprived him likewise of all hopes of ecclesiastic preferment for his son. In these circumstances he applied for advice respecting the establishment of the young

man in the world, to his brother Giles in London, after he had become an Alderman; expressing, at the same time, an earnest wish that, if any avenue to preferment was at all likely to open in the church, he might be a clergyman.

The Alderman very honestly and frankly told him, that he had no interest in the church; and, further, that the trade of a clergyman was in general a very poor one; there were some good livings, he said, no doubt, but he was afraid they were but rare. There were by far too many blanks for a prize, and, on the whole, the clergy business was a speculation on which no prudent man, who had not livings in his own gift as a provision for his son, should venture. "Why," said he, "I give twice as much to one of my clerks as your curates and lecturers can earn even in London. They are a set of poor hungry dogs,

dogs, seldom if ever to be seen at any corporation feast, or in any warm private family. But, brother," said he, "if you will send James to me, (for that was his name as well as his father's), I will take him into my own shop on the first vacancy. In the mean time, I doubt not of being able to get him a snug birth behind some other respectable counter. But all this, notice, on the supposition of his possessing proper accomplishments and talents. Tell him to attend to his writing; it is a great recommendation; indeed it is not to be dispensed with, to have a fair hand; and, above all things, let him mind his summing. Writing and summing, brother! writing and summing—these are the only points in education that are of real value which I need not tell you, who are so much more learned than I am. However, let me ask you, brother, what account has all your Greek and Latin

turned to? For my part, with a good writing hand, though I say it that should not say it, and a good knack at summing, I have made my way in this busy and bustling place *pretty well*; although, after paying my night's lodging at the inn where the waggon put up, I had not, I may safely say, half-a-guinea in my pocket. I luckily was taken into a shop, at first to go of errands; and here I am, your loving brother, and Alderman Jeffreys, at your service. I am no bragger, James, but I believe I could command more of the ready, if a good bargain offered, than all the curates and vicars of your county put together. Finish your son's education, brother, finish your son's education, writing and summing, and when he is of a proper age, send him to me. It shall be his own fault if he is not handsomely provided for."

This

This epistle excited in the breast of the poor vicar different emotions. He did not know whether to laugh, or indulge sentiments of indignation at the contracted and grovelling views of his brother, who saw nothing excellent or desirable in life but the acquisition and accumulation of money, and who comprehended the whole course of education in writing and summing; and notwithstanding all the Alderman's sayings, of which he boasted, his low and mean way of thinking heightened the disgust which he had long conceived at the character which habits of traffic, and particularly of a retail trade, almost invariably form.

He determined to keep his son for some time at home for his farther improvement in liberal knowledge, in the hope that some views might open of church preferment.

Yet he wrote a letter of thanks to his brother, though he could not refrain from reminding him, that riches were not to be regarded as the main object, whether respect was had to this life, or that which was to come.

One year elapsed after another; the young man pursued his studies with equal ardour and success.

A gentleman who had dropped many hints that he intended one of the livings on his estate for young Jeffreys, the companion of his son in his learning, and his prompter to application, being reduced to straits by too expensive a mode of life, sold the advowsons. Various circumstances, particularly an inundation of paper-money doubled the price of all the necessaries of life. The merchant, the manufacturer, and the labourer, raised the price of his commodity and his labour in proportion, but the scanty emoluments of the clergyman were fixed and stationary.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIX.

UNDER this pressure of disappointment and hard times, the Rev. Mr. Jeffreys represented to his son the real situation of their circumstances, which, being unwilling to discourage him and wound his sensibility, he had rather shaded and concealed. The situation, too, in which his mother and three sisters must be left should any thing happen to himself was fully displayed. Nothing was so near his heart as that his son should be placed in such a situation or line of life, as might enable him, with the blessing of God, to extend to

objects so near and dear to both, and, at the same time, so helpless, some degree of protection.

Though nothing could be more hateful to an ingenuous mind, trained up in liberal sentiments and studies, than to descend to the pursuits of trade, and particularly the concerns of a shop, yet the end would, in their case, ennoble the means. The mind, illumined by a course of liberal education, would preserve its purity amidst sordid examples, as the sun shines, without a diminution of its splendour, even on a dunghill.

There was nothing so complicated or mysterious in the business of a tradesman such as his uncle, that a mind, sharpened by study, might not master easily in the course of a few months, or even weeks. The honesty, rectitude, and purity of his mind, would not be any loss or drawback, but clearly an advantage.

advantage. Honest dealing was proverbially long standing. Rogues were, sooner or later, for the most part, caught in their own snares. A fortune might be acquired by fair trade, even before the approach of old age. This would afford the means, not only of an elegant retirement, but of alleviating the distress, and promoting the happiness of his fellow-creatures. On the whole it was fit to give way to circumstances, and to yield, with resignation and alacrity, to the dispensations of Providence.

His uncle was not untinctured with the common foibles of tradesmen, but he was, at bottom, an honest and kind-hearted man, and he had not a doubt but that, whenever he could, without any sacrifice of money, lend them a helping hand, he would most readily and cordially do it.

For

For some time the good vicar had prepared his son, by several hints, for this explanation ; yet, after all, it operated on the mind of James like a clap of thunder : To descend from the pursuits of literature and science, and the views of being employed in theological contemplations and sacred functions to the business of a shop, appeared not only as a degradation, but, in some measure, as the loss of existence. But every impression is strongest at first. Repetition blunts its force, and the mind, by recollecting and revolving a thousand circumstances, is gradually induced to form new schemes of happiness, to form new arrangements, and enter into designs contemplated at first with disgust and aversion.

James yielded to the reasoning of his father, and to an anxious concern for his mother and his sisters.

A letter was dispatched to the Alderman in London, announcing the intention

tention of his nephew to put himself under his direction; and this amiable youth, at the age of seventeen, took his leave of his father, mother, sisters, and the companions of his studies, amidst many tears and prayers for his welfare.

His arrival in London coincided with the period when both Sir Giles and Lady Jeffreys, teased and sick of the saucy impertinence and waggery of the Londoners, had begun to form a design of retiring to the country. They both of them received their nephew with much kindness, and invited him to take up his residence for the present in their own house, in Berkeley-street; and, what was more, this kindness was not the mere impulse of novelty and the moment, but constant and steady.

Mr. James Jeffreys, his nephew, he introduced to all the first people among his acquaintance. Perhaps both the
Knight

Knight and his Lady were somewhat vain of so genteel and accomplished a relation, for such he really was; for countenance, person, carriage, and a modest though unembarrassed address, he might have passed for the son of a nobleman, and a nobleman too, who knew and had taken care to form his sentiments and manners on the best models.

Sir Giles's own family consisted of an only son, and two daughters, both of whom, who were older than their brother, were married to creditable tradesmen, before he had risen to such high distinction, in his own ward.

It is well enough known that even the most industrious, saving, and hoarding trades-people will sometimes sacrifice wealth to vanity. Though the military profession is little, if at all better than the clerical, which Sir Giles held so cheap in respect of gain or profit, yet
to

to be an officer, a captain, a colonel, and, at last, perhaps, a general, would be a fine, shewy, and splendid situation. Sir Giles calculated how much he must lose by not breeding his son to his own business; nor was he unaware, that the lieutenant, captain, and even colonel, instead of saving any thing of his pay, would never cease to draw on him for farther supplies.

About the project of buying a commission for his son, he long hesitated. But his wife, like so many other wives of citizens, conceived that a commission in the army, and the shewy dress of an officer, would not only dub her son at once a gentleman, but reflect gentility on his family.

Her constant solicitations, joined to those of the young man himself, now in the eighteenth year of his age, prevailed. A commission was purchased for young Giles Jeffreys, in a regiment
of

of cavalry, and, by the time his cousin came to town, he had risen, by purchase, to the rank of a lieutenant.

His own son having thus entered on a line of life totally different from his own, Sir Giles conceived the design of establishing his nephew, who gained more and more every day on both his esteem and affection, in the succession to his own business, which, as already observed, was that of a haberdasher ; but, at the same time, he did not forget to stipulate, that he himself should receive from his nephew a certain portion of the annual profits.

Mr. James Jeffreys repaired to the house and shop in the city ; he occupied the first floor, and his clerks and warehousemen the second floor and the garrets. He attended closely to business, of which, in a short time, he became completely master ; and all things in the shop went on, as before, swimmingly.

This

This arrangement being made, the Knight lost no time to look about for some villa to which he might retire, quit saucy London, and all its impertinence and cares, commence country gentleman, and enjoy the pleasures and honours of knighthood in perfection.—He purchased a neat house and garden, with about five hundred acres of land, chiefly rented by one farmer, in the county of Kent, and, having disposed of his house in Berkeley-street, repaired to it directly, bag and baggage.

His house was situated at the extremity of Carleton, above mentioned, a pretty populous, though straggling village, in the neighbourhood of which there was a number of gentlemens' seats, and amongst the rest, that of Lord Clifden. In the village itself, some wealthy Citizens of London resided, who, like Sir Giles, had retired, or partly retired from business. Here
also

also was the parsonage house of a rich rectory, occupied, at present, as already noticed, by the worthy Dr. Jackson. His Curate also resided in the village, where he kept a flourishing day-school.

Sir Giles, on whose mind the roasting-bouts he had met with, on his new dignity, in London, had left still a very disagreeable impression, was not altogether easy as to the reception he might find among the gentlemen of the country. Being wholly unacquainted with the etiquette of genteel and fashionable life, it never once occurred to him, that on his first arrival, he had nothing to do but be quiet, and receive at home any visits that might be paid to him, in the way of welcoming him, by any of his neighbours, that might be good-natured and civil enough to make them. As there is no such thing as meeting among tradesmen; and, indeed, no doing any thing

thing in the City of London without a feast, he judged it expedient to prepare one, but in the mean time, to keep himself quite snug and retired within the walls of his own house and garden, and to surprize all his genteel neighbours with an invitation to his entertainment.

That he might secure a good reception in the neighbourhood, beyond a possibility of doubt, he determined to be extravagant for once, and send for a cook, with a variety of articles, and among others, even turtle, and such things as were *not in season*, from the London tavern.

Two days before that of the feast, he sallied forth in his one horse chaise, followed by a servant, in livery, on horseback, and, driving from one house to another, knocked boldly and loudly at the door, as became a person of his station, announcing himself, and without

out any preamble, told the different families, that he had come to invite them to a dinner, which was to be given at his house, at no later a time than the day after next.

The purchase of the villa, and the consequent appearance of Sir Giles and Lady Jeffreys in the neighbourhood, had been so sudden, that there was scarcely any one who had been informed of his former situation in life, or at all acquainted with his character; so that the gentlemen and ladies stared, without making any other reply than a slight bow, and a request that he would be pleased to sit down.

Some considered him as a madman. They endeavoured, in the course of a little conversation, to find out who, and what kind of a mortal he might be; but he had no sooner sat down, than he was up again. “I cannot stop, now,” he said, “I will see you frequently, at
more

more leisure. Here is a list in my hand, of all the genteel people—I have not a moment to spare. I shall not have time to make the whole round before it be dark.” Then he would take them by the hand, both ladies and gentlemen, and giving them a hearty shake, bounced out of the room, saying, “Wednesday, three o’clock, remember, Wednesday, three o’clock.”

He did not wait for, or desire any answer; never dreaming that an invitation to so great a feast could possibly be refused or evaded.

When he came to Lord Clifden’s, his Lordship was in his dressing room, adjusting his dress for dinner. Sir Giles being received by the servants, with proper respect, into the hall, was asked his name, to be carried up to the Earl of Clifden.

“My name,” said he, “is Sir Giles Jeffreys.”

The

The servant coming back, said that he had it in commission, from my Lord, to say, that he had not the honour of Sir Giles's acquaintance, and that he desired to be informed, if he had letters of introduction from any one, or any business with him.

The Knight was wholly at a loss how to interpret such a commission, and asked the servant what was the meaning of it ; adding that he had not come to ask any favour of his Lordship, as he was, thank God, above the necessity of asking favours from any one. " On the contrary," said he, " I have come to ask his Lordship to partake of the dinner which I am to give to all the folks of my own rank, or there-a-bouts, at my house, now called Jeffreys' Hall, in this neighbourhood.— Give my service to Lord Clifden, and tell him, that my name is Sir Giles Jeffreys, late Alderman and Lord Mayor

Mayor of the City of London ; you may add, if you please, that my son is a lieutenant in ——— regiment of cavalry. I have not time to stop ; but I shall expect to see his Lordship with the rest of the company, at my house, to dinner, on the day after next, at three o'clock precisely."

The servant observed, that it would be proper to wait until he should report his Lord's answer ; which was, that not having the honour to be at all acquainted with the gentleman, it was impossible for him to make any reply to his message.

" O," said Sir Giles, " tell his Lordship, that, though I am none of his acquaintance, and that though he is a perfect stranger to me, he is as welcome to a bit of my mutton, as a prince ; and that I shall therefore expect the honour of his Lordship's company to dinner without fail." With that he hastened

to the gate, and remounted his whisky.

Lord Clifden, on the report of the servant of what Sir Giles had said, set him down, without the least hesitation, as a maniac. And he cautioned the porter to be careful, in future, whom he should admit even into the hall.

Wednesday soon arrived, and the clock struck three, not one of those invited had come. But, said both Sir Giles and Lady Jeffreys, we must give them some law.

In about twenty minutes the Curate appeared, and with him the Excise Officer, whom he had taken the liberty of bringing in his hand, as he was always invited on similar occasions ; a circumstance with which Sir Giles, being a stranger, was probably unacquainted.

The city gentlemen, too, who resided in the village, soon presented themselves, with their wives, daughters, and
their

their whole families. Some half-pay officers also, who lived in the village, were introduced by those *warm and comfortable* gentlemen; but, after putting off dinner for more than half an hour, it appeared vain to expect either Lord Clifden or any of the neighbouring gentlemen, who did not know what to make of the very singular visit and invitation of Sir Giles, on Monday, and had given it in charge to some of their dependants in the village, to watch, and give some account, both of the man, and of the guests at his entertainment; if, indeed, after all, any entertainment should take place.

Neither Sir Giles nor Lady Jeffreys, were in the least discomposed at this disappointment. They ascribed it to a modest reluctance, on the part of country people, to accept of an invitation to partake of an expensive entertainment, without any previous acquaintance with the founder of the feast.

“Poh! poh!” said Sir Giles, “they think my heart lies in a narrow place. By and by they will know me better.” So they all set to with vigour, and it is almost incredible how great havoc they made, notwithstanding the non-appearance of the genteel families, among the various dishes that were set before them. Lady Giles proposed to send some basons of the turtle to the nearest of the absentees; but in consequence of some hints let fall from the half-pay officers, who did not wish that these good people should expose themselves, that this might not be well taken, the intention of out of doors hospitality was given up.

After the glass had circulated long and briskly, pipes and tobacco were called for, and about nine o'clock the company moved to depart. But Sir Giles said, “Nay, nay, Gentlemen, you must stay and help us to pick the bones.”—The Ladies returned from the drawing-room,

room, and the table groaned, a second time, under a profusion of the most substantial dishes.

In the course of conversation, the Knight put many questions respecting his new neighbours.

Lady Jeffreys was equally inquisitive about the Ladies. They were not more inquisitive than communicative and frank.

The Knight did not hesitate to give an account of himself with equal circumstantiality and fidelity ; how he had come to London in a waggon ; how he had been an errand boy, and clerk, a partner, and, at last, sole proprietor of that house and shop in which he had gained his fortune ; when, and how, he had courted his then *Dame*, now Lady Jeffreys ; how magnificently he had supported the dignity of Lord Mayor ; when, and on what occasion he had been knighted, and how ; and various

other particulars. Being really a good-natured man, he became fonder and fonder of his guests, the more he eat and drank, and the longer that he conversed with them. At parting, he shook them every one heartily by the hand, and said, "I hope, now that you know the way, you will be no strangers. If you should chance to pass near my house, any day, about three o'clock, you will commonly feel a good smell. Come in, and welcome." At which the city gentlemen grinned, and the officers made a low bow.

CHAP. XXX.

THE gentlemen in the 'near vicinity of the village, on hearing the particulars of the feast, and the history of the family who gave it, were differently affected according to their different humours and natural dispositions. Some expressed their indignation at the City Knight's low-bred audacity, in supposing that they would catch at his precipitate and absurd invitation. Others were moved with laughter, and immediately sat him down as an admirable subject of fun and diversion. Some of these last called on Sir Giles in a few

F 4

days

days thereafter, and, at parting, told him that they would be very glad of a call from him in return. They persuaded him to go a hunting with them, and, for this purpose, accommodated him with a spirited horse, which the poor simple Knight mounted without hesitation. The creature moved, at first, with great smoothness and gentleness, and Sir Giles sat upright with great ease and dignity; but no sooner was a hare started, and the hounds in full cry, then the hunter set off, as the other horses did, at full gallop, and with amazing speed. Sir Giles, unable to check or controul him, called out for assistance, clung to the mane, lost his whip, hat and wig, and, at length, on the horse taking a leap, fell, through mere fear, (for nothing is easier on such occasions than to keep one's seat,) into a ditch full of mud. He could never be persuaded to join the chase afterwards. As to shoot-

shooting, though he had been Captain of a body of volunteers, he honestly declared, that he knew not either how to charge or fire a gun.

He had as little skill or taste for fishing ; of agriculture he was wholly ignorant ; for books, there was none in which he took the smallest delight, since his retirement from business had induced him to throw aside, as lumber, the *Tables of Interest*, and the *Ready Reckoner*. As he could play at drafts and back-gammon, he went about from house to house, in the mornings, in quest of any one who could partake in these amusements. Such an one was the Curate, to whom this accomplishment stood in greater stead than any of his learned acquirements ; for he was heartily welcome to Sir Giles' table, and the oftener the better. But drafts and back-gammon, could not be continued with any degree of interest and

amusement, without interruption, and for ever.

The arrival of night, reminded him of his club. But no club, at all suitable to his rank, could be formed, in a village ale-house. It was his principal evening's amusement, not only to compare his outgoings with his income, but even to look over an immense variety of receipts, day-books, and ledgers, long ago settled. He almost wished that he were freed from his title, in his shop, and in the midst of his former companions.

Among the gentlemen in his neighbourhood, there was one of an easy fortune, and happy temper, young, cheerful, well-educated, and full of whim and humour, but who, being of a kindly and generous nature, never suffered these last qualities, as too many do, to trespass too far on the tranquillity and happiness of others. He was married to a lady, the daughter of a neighbouring

bouring gentleman, who was very grave, and of a turn somewhat approaching to pensiveness, but who had no dislike to any thing gay and humorous, and who, even if she had, would not, by any means, have opposed any amusement, however frolicksome, of her husband's, to whom she was entirely devoted, and whose greatest happiness it was, to make him happy.

At the house of this amiable pair, Sir Giles was a frequent visitor. Mr. Mortimer, for that was the gentleman's name, found in the simplicity, ignorance, and even narrow prejudices of the Knight, a source of much amusement. He played upon him a great deal, but not so as either to hurt his feelings or injure his fortune.

Sir Giles complained to him, that not one of his neighbours, except the Officers, Curate, and Exciseman, ever came near him, notwithstanding the

frank advance he had made by inviting them all to his entertainment. Even the tradesmen who had retired, like himself, from business, seemed to give themselves airs of distance, reserve and superiority.

It is well known that your East India Nabobs, and all who make large fortunes by trade, are very careful by no means to associate, at least on a visiting footing, with any one who does not come up, or very nearly up, to themselves in his equipage, and whose style and manner of living they often calculate this matter with. A degree of exactness as ridiculous as it is low-minded. So also, of course, do their wives and daughters.

Mr. Mortimer, who was fully aware of this, told Sir Giles very frankly, and very truly, that the reason why the gentlemen from the city, residing in the village, declined to visit him, in a family

mily way, was, that whereas they kept chariots or coaches, with two horses, he (the Knight) kept only a one horse-chaise. "There is not a doubt," he said, "but they will very readily come to any feast to which you may invite them, even if it were less splendid than, by all accounts, your last was. But if you wish their families to visit and receive the visits of Lady Jeffreys, something else must be done. It will not be enough," continued Mr. Mortimer, "to equal them in the number of horses in your carriage. In revenge of their insolence, you should, what you very well can, exceed them. Instead of two, launch forth, at once, with three horses to your carriage ; two harnessed to the carriage, in the usual manner, and one by way of leader to the other two. A coachman sits on the box, and a postillion on the foremost horse."

The

The Knight was not only startled at the enormous expence which this must occasion, but he doubted whether it would not appear very odd and awkward, as all the carriages that ever he had seen in London, were drawn either by one, or two, or four, or sometimes six horses. The King's coach he knew was drawn by eight horses.

He put the question to his conductor or governor in those matters, whether he himself had ever seen any coach to which three horses had been harnessed?

Mr. Mortimer, with an equivocation which the lovers of harmless diversion will perhaps excuse, hesitated not to declare that nothing was more common, perhaps, not in London, but in every county of England.

The poor Knight spoke of gentlemen's carriages; but Mr. Mortimer alluded to stage coaches.

After:

After some little time spent in calculation, and when it was considered that the third horse might be dropt, when the object was accomplished, Sir Giles determined to take his friend's advice. A coach with three horses drove Sir Giles and Lady Jeffreys, with equal speed and splendor, through the village, and throughout all the neighbourhood.

To the gentlemen of the country, this strange equipage was an object of ridicule. But, with the genteel families within the village, it most effectually answered the purpose intended, and that in an incredibly short time ; for, on the very next day, after it had been sported, 'Squire Hammond, 'Squire Anderson, 'Squire Todd, 'Squire Edgar, and other 'Squires, called and left their cards. So, also, on the day thereafter, did Mrs. Hammond, Mrs. Anderson,
Mrs.

Mrs. Todd, Mrs. Edgar, and other Mistresses.

The sphere of Sir Giles' existence being thus in some measure extended, he was somewhat less languid and uneasy, because somewhat more occupied. Yet still by far the greater part of his time hung heavy on his hand.

He confessed to Mr. Mortimer that he did not know what to do. If it were not for his pipe, he said, he should be sometimes almost tempted to hang himself.

Mr. Mortimer advised him to have recourse to books. But Sir Giles ingenuously confessed, that books were his aversion; and that even the very sight of the book of Common Prayer, far from exciting any thing pleasurable, or agreeable in his mind, was, God forgive him! he said, rather disgusting to him than otherwise.

He

He then recommended Sir Giles to get a chemical apparatus, and amuse himself with experiments in chemistry; adding, that a class of chemists, called Alchymists, did not despair of arriving at the art of turning common metals into gold. Get a crucible, an alembic, and some *menstruums* and other articles; send for some poor student or graduate from Edinburgh, who will live with you and teach you the art, without any extravagant recompence, and set to work without loss of time.

The idea that it was possible, by chemistry, to turn metals into gold, did not fail to make an impression on the mind of Sir Giles Jeffreys. He requested Mr. Mortimer, who had attended a course of chemistry when he was at the University at Cambridge, to give him some notion of the nature of it, that he might be enabled to judge whether

whether it was withing the reach of his capacity.

Mr. Mortimer did so. He talked of menstrua, dissolvents, the decomposition of bodies by heat and moisture, analysis and recomposition, fixity and fluidity, acids, alkalis, and different kinds of airs and gasses; carbon, mephitic air, azote—— “ Stop! stop!” said Sir Giles, “ I am sure the science of chemistry is above my noddle. Brass will never be changed into gold for me, at least, not by chemistry. But, thank God, I have turned many things into gold in another manner.”

Mr. Mortimer, who expected nothing less than this frank confession, for the Knight was, indeed, a man of the most perfect candor and simplicity of manners, laughed heartily, and said, “ I fear indeed, Sir Giles, it is too late to think of sending you to your studies.
But,”

But," he added, "there is another mode of obtaining both instruction and amusement, besides that of making experiments and the reading of books, I mean travelling; have you ever been abroad?"

"Never," replied Sir Giles, "out of Old England."

"Then you have a great deal of pleasure to come, in making the tour of Europe; or, at least, in visiting our next neighbours, the French, Flemings, and Dutch."

The French, he said, he cordially detested. To Holland and Flanders he had no dislike. And he began to calculate the expence, when he was interrupted by Lady Jeffreys, who happened to be present.

This good woman, whose character, in the main, bore a near resemblance to that of her husband, acquired from the habit of making some short but frequent

frequent excursions with Sir Giles, to villages near London, a taste for travelling, that is, for being hurled from one place to another. Of the various objects of nature or art, that presented themselves to the view of a well-educated and intelligent traveller, she was wholly regardless. But the motion of the vehicle was pleasant ; and they were received at the inns, where they halted and dined, with the utmost civility and kindness.

That Sir Giles should make any tour, short or long, unaccompanied by her, was what she never dreamt of.

Amidst his enquiries of Mr. Mortimer, therefore, about the expence of a visit to the Continent, she hastily put the question, whether this same Continent was a place that might be visited without going, as was necessary in going to Margate, by water. “ For,” said she, “ I have been under a vast terrification
at

at the sea, ever since that dreadful storm, in which we had nearly been lost in returning from Margate."

The Knight, instead of blushing for his Lady, laughed heartily at her ignorance, both in supposing that there was no access to Margate but by water, and that without crossing the sea a trip might be made to the Continent.— Though he was far from being conceited of his own knowledge, and not disposed by nature to the least degree of petulance or arrogance, he could not help crowing over his spouse on this occasion, and displaying his superiority in geography, by stating the notion he had of the situation of different places, and what might be gone to by land, and what not. But after what had been said by Lady Giles, the project of a trip to the Continent was immediately dropt.

"Then," said Mr. Mortimer, "you may jaunt about in England."

"Of

“ Of England,” replied the Knight,
“ I have seen enough already.”

“ Wales, then, or Scotland, where mountains are to be seen rising above the clouds.”

Those were poor comfortless places, as he had been informed ; no accommodation on the road. As to mountains, being once on the borders of North-Wales, something had been shewn to him at a distance, like a cloud, which they told him was the top of a mountain ; but the truth was, that for his part, he never desired to see any thing higher than the top of St. Paul’s.

In the mean time, while the Knight was contending against the indignities he had to encounter on his entrée into the life of a Country Gentleman, his nephew, with the aid of a worthy man, who had long acted in the shop as chief clerk, carried on the business with propriety and with success. His leisure
time

time he devoted to reading, and his evenings, instead of being spent at plays or coffee-houses, were passed, for the most part, in the same manner. He often, when the weather invited, strolled to Norwood, Highgate, or Hampstead, for the benefit of air and exercise, and the pleasure of the extensive prospects which those delightful heights afford, of a country, not indeed much variegated, or picturesque, but wide, highly cultivated, and flourishing in population and various industry. It added not a little to his amusement, in those and some other excursions, that he had dived a little into the study of natural history—the mineral strata, the forms of plants, and the habits of animals.—While he rested on some convenient spot, he would sometimes amuse himself with making drawings, of any object that happened to strike him, such

as

as the gypsies in Norwood, cooking their victuals, and taking landscapes.

Had Sir Giles possessed the turn and accomplishments of his nephew, the country would not only have been tolerable to him, but a scene and source of delight. In their respective situations, for the present, the order of nature seemed to be inverted.

His visits to his uncle were neither so rare, as to indicate any want of attention, nor so frequent as to occasion any suspicion of a neglect of business. In the course of these visits he gained the acquaintance, the esteem, and attachment of Mr. Mortimer, whose mind was, in many respects, congenial. This gentleman invited him kindly to his house, and there received him as kindly. He never visited his uncle without also visiting Mr. Mortimer.

To Mrs. Mortimer also and her
guests

guests he was very acceptable. The modesty, ingenuity, sense, and sensibility of his mind, shone forth in his countenance, which was sweetly intelligent, and appeared also in the grace and easy, not officious respectfulness of his exterior deportment. In any discourse almost that was started, he could bear a part; though he never led, but after some reserve, and at proper intervals, followed the course of the conversation.

Among Mrs. Mortimer's visitors were the Ladies Eleanor and Laura Levet, the daughters of Lord Clifden; the former distant, formal, and deeply tinctured with family pride; the latter affable, courteous, and full of sensibility, tenderness and goodness. Notwithstanding the disparity of rank and fortune, a congeniality of minds rendered Lady Laura and Mr. Jeffreys mutual objects of sympathy and regard,

which in process of time, was ripened into affection.

A kind of courtship was carried on in perfect silence, by the mere power of nature, operating in a thousand ways, not to be described. Minds, in such perfect unison, seemed formed and destined for each other. They were mutually drawn together, as by chemical attraction. Neither party was or could be ignorant of the complacency and interest with which they were regarded by each other. The modesty, respect and reserve which appeared in the deportment of the young gentleman, (for such in reality he was, if the character of a gentleman is to be estimated by his mind and manners, and not his circumstances or fortune) towards Lady Laura, though they restrained his tongue, were, in fact, with a delicate, sensible, and susceptible mind, the most powerful advocates.

It

It was long before he could suffer himself to believe that the sentiments he felt toward Lady Laura, were those of love, and longer still before he avowed it. It was long also before Lady Laura could own to herself that her heart acknowledged more than regard and esteem for Mr. Jeffreys.

In writing he at last declared his passion, with the singular conclusion, that he neither hoped, nor, for her sake, even wished for success.

No answer was returned; but the next interview betrayed an answer in the embarrassed, yet sympathetic manner and looks of Lady Laura, which Mr. Jeffreys did not misinterpret. An epistolary correspondence ensued.

Lord Clifden's family spent some of the winter months in town.—Notwithstanding the vigilance and severity of the marriage act, they were privately married.

The

The fruit of their union was Miss Bellingham, as above related.

From a compliance with the solicitations of her husband to remove, in due time, from her father's to him, she was restrained by a modesty and timidity, which induced her to put off a matter so trying from day to day.

CHAP. XXXI.

THE grief of Mr. Jeffreys, at the death of Lady Laura, and the supposed fate of her infant, bordered on despair. The first idea that occurred to his distracted mind, was to follow her instantly into the grave, to plunge into eternity. But he recollected that his religious duty forbad, and that there were still objects who had claims on his affection, and even his exertions for their welfare. Various considerations had prevented him from communicating his marriage even to his own father and mother ; but, in extreme grief, we

naturally confide our sorrows to those who will take the deepest share in them. On such occasions children cling, like infants, to their mother's bosom.

After a fortnight spent in great agony of mind, Mr. Jeffreys went to Northamptonshire, and explained the whole of his situation to his good and intelligent father. The consolations of sympathy soothed the extremity of his grief. But there was danger still that, in a mind of so much sensibility, such an excess of affliction might rise into phrenzy, or, on the other hand, sink into the stupor of melancholy madness.

Time, which involves so many unforeseen calamities, is also the grand soother of misfortune. Distance of space, too, tends to the restoration of equanimity, by weakening the force of every idea and impression. The worthy and intelligent Vicar, therefore, immediately determined on advising, or

rather directing (for his will at all times nearly a law to his son, was still more so in his present situation) James to quit England, and go to some very remote country, where a variety of new, striking, and interesting objects might co-operate with distance of space, and the lapse of time, in soothing his anguish and restoring tranquillity to his troubled soul. Such a country was India ; where every thing in both the natural and moral world, would be new ; if not the cradle, yet one of the earliest seats of population, sciences, and arts, and rendered interesting to every one tolerably conversant in history by a thousand recollections and associations. Even the voyage thither would have a happy and more immediate effect.

The Vicar, though he could very ill afford to be at the expence, made a journey to Kent, and communicated the state into which his son had fallen,

and all the circumstances, to his brother, who was utterly amazed, and remained for some time in silent astonishment. He knew of his nephew's illness, but was ignorant of the cause. He was not altogether untouched by sympathetic sorrow, but to that sensibility and delicacy of sentiment which is known to minds feeling by nature, and improved by a liberal education, he was a stranger. His sympathy with his nephew's distress, which he by no means considered in so serious a light as if he had suffered either in his body or his fortune, soon gave way to various reflections. That he had been able to gain the affections of a Lady of so high a quality as the daughter of an Earl, raised him not a little in his esteem. He regretted the Lady's death and that of the infant, as an alliance would have been formed, had they lived, between his own and the Clifden family. "But,"
said

said he with a shrug, "What can't be cured must be endured. As James, it seems, has a knack at courtship, he may have good luck yet. Business too goes on well; he must pluck up a good heart." But the man of letters, pitying rather than blaming the insensibility of the tradesman, endeavoured to convince him that the life, and, what was more precious still, the rational faculty of his nephew was at stake. Application to business in his state was utterly impossible. Nothing was at present to be thought of but to soothe his mind by such gentle amusement as it might be capable of receiving, in the course of time, by a change of place and circumstances.

The Knight, after pausing a little, proposed that James should go for a few weeks to Bath; after which the best thing he could do would be to bustle as much as possible in the shop.

Nothing for driving away melancholy thoughts like business. But his brother, after positively assuring him that his son neither would nor could ever think of the shop any more, told him that he was fully determined, by his advice, to go to India; where, he added, there was an old pupil of his settled in flourishing circumstances as a free merchant in Calcutta.

The house and shop was disposed of for a very considerable sum, which the Knight very generously divided with his nephew. Leave was easily obtained from the Court of Directors. In less than six months, Mr. Jeffreys was kindly received by Mr. Alston, his father's friend, at his garden-house on the south bank of the Hooghley.

The tumults of his mind had, by this time, very considerably subsided. By degrees he recovered his wonted serenity, though an air of melancholy marked,

marked, as it did through life, his looks, gait, and deportment.

He made excursions to various places in the districts watered by the Ganges, and, among others, the famous Benares, the Rome, or Jerusalem, of Hindostan. He conversed much with the natives, at first through interpreters, but, in process of time, in their own tongue, and made many drawings of the sublime and picturesque scenes which were so often presented to his view.

At Calcutta he had the good fortune to become acquainted with the amiable and ingenious Dr. R——h, and, under his direction, resumed the delightful and tranquillizing study of botany, on which he had entered. Of the books with which he endeavoured to occupy his thoughts during his voyage, that of the greatest value, as well as that in which he found the greatest relief, was Linnæus. Thus, in a kind

of ingenious indolence, he passed his time; his sole object being not either pleasure, ambition, or gain, but to occupy and amuse his mind, his expences were few, and next to none. For these the very interest in India of the small stock of money he had carried out with him was sufficient, as he resided in the house of his father's friend, or in that of Dr. R——h, who was greatly pleased with his manners, conversation, and botanical pursuits, and to whom he was even of some little use, in making drawings of a great variety of plants. The generous Mr. Alston made an offer of introducing him into some mercantile concerns, by which he might, and most probably would, have accumulated a large fortune. But to fortune he was wholly indifferent.

Among not a few, nor infrequent visitors at Mr. Alston's, was Stephano,
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an Armenian merchant, who, by the good sense, liberality, and strict probity, which, in the course of a long and industrious life, directed all his dealings, had acquired a vast fortune. Yet this did not secure his happiness, nor exempt him from heavy affliction. His wife, whom he tenderly loved did not survive for many days the birth of Susanna, his only daughter. His two sons had, some years since, both of them fallen in a contest with the Arabs, as they were travelling with a pretty numerous and well-armed train, between Aleppo and Bussorah. Not long thereafter, his daughter, who had not been long married, lost her husband. Though by birth a Greek, and profession a merchant, a young man of the strictest probity and honour, and of the most amiable manners. His poor young widow was inconsolable for his loss. Like Mr. Jeffreys, she flew for relief
and

and consolation to the house and society of her tenderly affectionate father, whom she loved and revered with all the ardour that his worth and goodness could inspire into the best of hearts. Yet she was unable often, or long to sustain the society of even her father; she indulged her grief in retirement, sometimes in her own apartment, at others in an umbrageous gloom, at the extremity of a garden. Her health became so much impaired, that she was reduced to a skeleton, and the most serious apprehensions were entertained of her being cut off by a consumption.

The place where Stephano had principally resided, though he was a very great traveller, and, in the course of trade, made long and frequent journeys, was Surat; but the English physician there, and Dr. S——, of Bombay, whose advice was asked on so alarming an occasion, both concurred

red in recommending a sea voyage, and a change of air and objects.

The afflicted Stephano went by sea with his daughter to Bombay, and from thence to Calcutta without stopping at Madras or any other place, as had been intended in case of the Lady's being fatigued with confinement on ship-board. Whether she found herself so much better, as she said she was, at sea, than on land, or that she was unwilling to encounter new faces, she expressed a very strong desire to go on without interruption to Calcutta, where they would have a house of their own, and where, of course, she would be more at her own disposal.

It was not till after a voyage of more than two months, that they arrived at the place of their destination, a circumstance that was not to be regretted, as the sea air, and perhaps the constant change of air, and even the motion of
the

the ship, had manifestly a good effect on the debilitated frame of the tender voyager.

Mr. Alston, to whom his correspondent Stephano had written, had provided a comfortable residence at Calcutta, near his own quarters, and also a small garden-house and cottage, at five or six miles distance. The proper number of servants was retained; and they set down, for the present, in the capital of British India, without determining any thing as to the time they should remain there. The change of air and objects had a happy effect on his Susanna; her strength and health were in some measure restored.

Mutual visits were exchanged by Mr. Alston and Stephano with their friends at their garden-houses, as well as their residences in Calcutta. Now and then Mr. Jeffreys would be prevailed on to remain with Stephano, in the country,

country, who began to conceive a friendship for him, after the flourishing business of Mr. Alston recalled him to town. A similarity of sorrows and of characters insensibly moulded the minds of the Armenian, the lovely and tender Susanna, and their English guest into the most harmonious sympathy and accord, which, in process of time, were improved into new though congenial sentiments. The same sensibility that mourns with excess the loss of departed friends, lays open the mind, after the extremity of grief is abated by time, to new impressions.

The first proposal of an union between two young people, already so much united by a similarity of circumstances and of feelings, came from the good and generous Stephano, who had already adopted Mr. Jeffreys as his son. That union, after an interval of about two years, took place, a grandson added

ed to the family of Stephano, and added also to his consolation. They lived altogether in one family in the most cordial harmony and mutual affection for many years. But when the time appointed came, the aged and good Stephano descended into the house appointed for all living, leaving his son and daughter, of course, heirs of his great fortune.

The possession of this naturally awakened in the breast of Mr. Jeffreys the desire usually entertained by all who have large estates or possessions, of transmitting it to his offspring, and establishing a splendid family. And this he as naturally wished to establish, not in India, or any other part of Asia, but in England.

Amidst all the vicissitudes of his fortune, and all his painful recollections, his native country was still dear to him, and often recurred to his imagination

as

as the place where, above all others, he could wish yet, for some time, to live, and then to die.

While his second father lived, he subjected all those emotions to the propriety and fitness of residing in any part of the world that contained the family that had generously adopted him. Nor was it without much hesitation that he proposed to his wife to pass to another quarter of the world. He declared, that if she had the least reluctance, he should never mention the subject more, but cheerfully remain in Bengal, or go wheresoever she pleased.

Susanna not only consented to go to England, but even expressed a desire to do so. There she said she might hope to see and enjoy the society of his kindred, who would be as dear to her as her own—the nearest and dearest of whom, she observed, she had now lost.

Though

Though the Asiatics, overborne and oppressed by despotic governments, have in general most of the vices of slaves, yet, from their physical temperature, they inherit a disposition to kindness, love, and all generous affections. Stephano and his amiable daughter, combining the advantages of a genial climate with those of a regular and equal government, were in circumstances propitious to the developement of every virtue.

The sentiments expressed by Susanna call to mind those of the widowed Ruth to her husband's mother Naomi, " Orpha kissed her mother-in-law ; but Ruth clave unto her. And she (Naomi) said, Behold thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods : return thou after thy sister-in-law. And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee ; for whither thou goest I will go ;
and

and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also if aught but death part thee and me."

CHAP. XXXII.

IT was the principal occupation of Mr. Jeffreys, after his son, who was named after his grand-father, Stephano, had attained to the fifth year of his age, to manage his education, which, though private tutors may be had in Calcutta, he took wholly upon himself, following exactly the footsteps of his own father in his own education.

Stephano was a boy of quick parts, and learned the lessons taught him by his father with much facility. The satisfaction arising from thence was frequently interrupted by indications of a
strong

strong propensity to pleasure, and of a spirit not only ardent, but which threatened, in the progress of years, and of the passions, to be ungovernable. But Mr. Jeffreys, like so many parents, consoled himself with the reflection that strong passions are the usual concomitants of strong powers; that the temper of his son would be mellowed by time and experience; and that even the wildest youths not unfrequently became the brightest men.

For two years after the departure of his son, Mr. Jeffreys remained at, or rather in the near vicinity of Calcutta, for the purpose of winding up the affairs of his late father-in-law, who, from habit rather than a desire of enlarging his fortune, had carried on the business of merchandize on a wide scale, though not to such an extent as formerly; and for taking the proper steps for transmitting

ing and securing his fortune in England.

Taking leave, at length, of Mr. Alston, Dr. R——h, and some other friends, to all of whom he gave some valuable tokens of his affectionate regard and remembrance, he embarked with his Lady and two male and two female servants, on board an Indiaman, which, after a voyage of five months, landed them all safely at Falmouth.

CHAP. XXXIII.

AFTER Mr. Jeffreys had spent two days with Mr. and Mrs. Gower, during which time he had related to them what the reader has been just acquainted with, and they, in their turn, had informed him of every circumstance relative to his daughter, together with her having, for a time, been adopted by the Delmore family, until the discovery that Miss Hervey was the undoubted heiress of her father—they set forward, having first, the day before, dispatched a messenger to the vicarage in Northamptonshire, where they were receiv-

ed with ringing of bells, and every natural demonstration of joy.

The old Rector and his wife embraced them all by turns, and declared that they now should quit this scene of cares and troubles in perfect peace, since their every wish was accomplished in the return of their beloved and affectionate son, together with the unexpected appearance of so lovely a granddaughter.

Mr. Jeffreys wished that his brother Sir Giles and Lady Jeffreys, who had long ago paid the debt of nature, had been still living, to see their nephew returned, both rich and happy, to his native village.

Their own son, now advanced to the rank of Colonel in the army, had dissipated a great part of the large fortune which had descended to him, and seemed likely, as Mr. Jeffreys told his son, to see the remainder out, if he
went

went on in the idle and dissipated course he then pursued.

Mr. James Jeffreys declared that his cousin should never want whilst he lived. For though Sir Giles had not done by him as he could have wished, by placing him in a shop rather than enabling him to pursue the course of studies he had begun, yet he had befriended him in his own way, and it was through his removal to London, and his visits to Carleton, that he had seen and been beloved by his wife, Lady Laura Levet, and that he was now blessed with such a treasure in his daughter, in whom he contemplated all the graces and virtues of her angelic parent, and towards whom he now looked for all the happiness he ever expected in this ever-varying scene, until he should again join her mother in a better state: for he could not but see, that his present Lady, Mrs. Jeffreys,

was far gone in a gradual decline, which had advanced with great rapidity since her arrival in England, and the news of her son's death had reached her.

Mr. Jeffreys, the morning after his arrival, had the pleasure to be joined by his two sisters, who were married to respectable gentlemen farmers in the county, with whom he made the tour of the village, calling upon every one, however humble their station, who had known him when a young man. He enquired into all their concerns, and particularly into their present circumstances of his father, and, in many ways, administered to their comfort. He was followed by the blessings of the people wherever he went, acquired at a small expence of time and money. He said that he considered this pleasure, so purchased, as the only true and intrinsic value of wealth.

The

The treasures of India, so used, certainly are a blessing to this country, the elder Mr. Jeffreys would often say, but otherwise a curse; for the sudden influx of wealth, imported by these nabobs, and displayed in the ostentatious purchase of every thing scarce and rare, at any price, renders a poor man's guinea of not more than half its original value. Besides, the possessors of these overgrown fortunes are but too apt to look down with supercilious scorn on the native nobility and gentry of a county.

Having resided nearly a month in the house of his father, Mr. Jeffreys was preparing to leave Northamptonshire, when he was prevented by the rapid decline of his wife, who, without any severe struggle, after keeping her bed for a few days, died, saying that she could now quit this world without a sigh, since she left her husband with

kind relations and friends, who, as long as it pleased the Almighty to spare him, would be to him what she wished that she had hopes of joining her dear and ever to be regretted Stephano.

The death of his wife was a severe affliction to Mr. Jeffreys, as she had been an affectionate friend to him, and had soothed him in many melancholy hours passed in absence from his own country.

His distress was, in some measure, alleviated, when he considered how much she was attached to her son, and that the rest of her life would have been spent in fruitless and unavailing regret for his loss.

Mr. and Mrs. Gower exerted themselves all in their power to console and amuse their father. They determined to leave Northamptonshire as soon as they could prevail on Mr. Jeffreys to do so after the funeral had taken place, and to pay their promised visit to Bentley-Abbey.

ley-Abbey, thinking that a change of scene would contribute to tranquillize the mind of Mr. Jeffreys.

After this visit they hoped to be able to go directly to Carleton, and there to realize their plans of future happiness in rendering all around them easy and contented. They regarded happiness as a star, the sweet influence of whose radiance they could only feel when reflected from the hearts of others—considering that Providence only permits us to be happy in consequence of the good we do to our neighbours.

Mr. Jeffreys, if possible, would have prevailed on his father and mother to have removed to the neighbourhood of Holmby. This they declined, as they also did an increase of allowance, already too liberal, they said, for their limited wants and desires. They promised, at parting with their son, that, as long as it pleased the Almighty to

spare them, they would spend some months every summer with them at Carleton.

With this assurance Mr. Jeffreys and Mrs. Gower were contented ; and, after having left in the hands of the venerable rector a considerable sum, to be distributed according to the wants and circumstances of his flock, they set forward on their journey to Bentley-Abbey. Mrs. Gower had not apprized her friends of the exact time she might be expected. Knowing that they were at home she considered this as unnecessary.

They travelled by easy stages, not keeping the direct road, that they might be at liberty to see more of the agricultural part of the country, as Mr. Jeffreys wished to see how far we had advanced in improvement during an absence of twenty-one years.

He

He had heard much, whilst in India, of Boards established in England for this purpose, and had seen experiments made upon their plans in Bengal, by gentlemen who had been at home and returned thither.

As he intended now to settle, and make farming a pursuit, he wished to collect information on the subject. This he thought would be best accomplished by conversing with the real farmers of the country. He knew that gentlemen were much given to make experiments at great expence, and that, by dint of perseverance, they sometimes brought them to bear, but, at the same time, that they were more frequently obliged to abandon them themselves, though they would boast of their improvements and recommend them to others. The true farmers, whose interest it was to cultivate the soil so as to be most productive, were the men most

to be depended on as to real instruction. With these he conversed, and was much pleased to find that, as to our state of improvement, accounts had not been exaggerated.

When the party came within about twenty miles of the Abbey, they determined to rest at a very good inn they met with, and the next morning to proceed and reach the Abbey by dinner time.

It was a very fine moon-light evening, and, it being very warm weather, Mrs. Gower sat in a balcony that gave her the command of the door at which the company alighted. She had not long sat there before a chaise and four came with the rapidity of lightning up to the door, the drivers calling out, before they stopped, " A chaise and four instantly !"

When they stopped, a gentleman got out, handing a lady, who, as she was getting

getting out, said to the gentleman, "Remember the box."

The voice was familiar to Mrs. Gower, which roused her curiosity to know who it could be. She mentioned the circumstance to her husband, who went down stairs in order to enquire.

The post-boys said that they did not know who the gentlefolks were, but they supposed it was a run-away business. They were hired by a servant, and conducted to a cross road, where they met the gentlefolk, who came out of a field as soon as they stopped. This was all they knew. They said they had orders to drive with all speed, and that they were promised to be rewarded accordingly. The gentleman, they added, has kept his word, shewing a guinea, which he had given to each of the drivers.

With this information Mr. Gower returned to his wife. She was not satisfied,

fied, for the voice was most familiar to her. She therefore determined to go herself to the mistress of the house, and try to find out who it was from her, as she might know who the Lady was, though the postillions did not.

Mr. Gower laughed at his wife, saying, "Indeed, my love, I did not believe that you had been so curious. I see that an elopement is an interesting thing to the female sex."

She excused herself by replying, that she certainly took an interest in the happiness of her friends, and was extremely anxious to find out who was so imprudent as to venture on so dreadful and desperate a precipice. However, said she, while I am explaining my motives, the birds may be flown.

She descended a part of the staircase, when a door suddenly opened, and she had a full view of the face of the Lady, who was just in the act of drawing

drawing a veil over it for concealment, and who, uttering a convulsive scream, fell at her feet.

It was Mrs. Dalling, conducted by the Duke of Denbeigh, with whom she was flying from a truly good and affectionate husband, to experience all the ills that such a conduct merited, and generally met with.

Mrs. Gower could only utter, "Caroline!" and sunk into the arms of her husband, who had just shut the room door, and, hearing the scream, had ran out to see what occasioned it.

Conviction now stared Mr. Gower in the face the instant he caught a glimpse of the Duke, for he could not see that of Mrs. Dalling, as she lay at the feet of his wife.

Mrs. Gower recovered and burst into tears. As soon as she was seated in a chair in the room from which the Duke had issued, Mr. Gower took up Mrs. Dalling,

Dalling, who, after the administration of a little water, opened her eyes, and, looking wildly around her, instantly hid them with her hands that they might not again encounter those of her friends.

The Duke now interfered, desiring her to prepare to depart, as the chaise was waiting, taking hold of her arm. She attempted to rise, but found this impossible. Mrs. Gower, too, getting up, took hold of her gown, declaring that she should not go from thence until an explanation had taken place why she was travelling in that hurried manner alone.

The Duke, addressing himself to Mr. Gower, said all explanation was needless; that he presumed he had no authority to demand any, and, when it was proper, he knew how to act. At present he should consider all interruption as impertinent.

Mr.

Mr. Gower answered, that certainly he could not detain Mrs. Dalling if she had the folly to proceed in a career of infamy; but should she endeavour, though late, to retrace the path towards virtue and honor, he would endeavour to be her conductor and protector at the hazard of every thing dear to him.

The Duke said that his interference should cost him dear, and concluded by advising Mrs. Gower not to distress her friend, whose affections had been placed on an undeserving object, from whom he was conducting her. That as soon as the necessary forms could be gone through, he meant to place her in a situation far above that she was now quitting.

He again attempted to persuade her to proceed on her journey, but Mrs. Gower clasped her so close to her, that she could not disengage herself had she been so inclined.

They

They were in this state when the door opened, and Mr. Dalling rushed into the room, pale and much disordered. He cast an indignant look at his wife, and walked directly up to the Duke, telling him that he should expect an explanation from him in the next room.

He bowed to Mr. and Mrs. Gower, whose presence, on the present occasion, could not but surprise him, and immediately left the apartment. Mr. Gower instantly demanded of the Duke what he meant to do? saying that he must follow Mr. Dalling.

Mrs. Gower began now to be greatly alarmed, lest any thing serious should happen to her husband. She instantly rang to desire Mr. Jeffreys might be called. He came, when she informed him that his presence would be necessary in the next room, where Philip would explain all particulars. He instantly repaired thither. The Duke following

lowing him, the two friends were left alone.

Neither of them were able to speak for some time ; at length Mrs. Gower asked how it was possible she should meet her friend in such a suspicious and degraded situation ?

She said that she was a very unhappy woman ; that Mr. Dalling and her were never likely to live happily together ; that she had given her hand without her heart ; and, in short, that she never would return to Bentley-Abbey. She desired Mrs. Gower not to blame, but to pity her.

She knew the step she had taken could never be countenanced by her ; but she should not have left the Abbey, miserable as she was, had not the Duke promised to marry her, as soon as a divorce could be procured.

Mrs. Gower heard her with much grief declare these sentiments ; for
though

though she knew the licentiousness of the times had rendered them familiar to the ear, yet she could not but shudder to think they were adopted by her whom she had been accustomed to love as a sister, the companion of her youthful hours, and also, as she hoped, the friend of her maturer judgment. She believed her gaiety the effect of a love of admiration, but had no conception that she harboured in her mind one guilty thought. She wished, if possible, even now, to snatch her from utter ruin, but did not know how this was possible. However, in the disordered and hurried state of her mind, she determined to do all that was possible for Caroline even in spite of herself.

She remonstrated against the step she had taken. If she did not love her husband, yet did she not love her child, whom she had abandoned for ever, and who would look on her name, as she
grew

grew up, with horror? Did she not wish her to be amiable and virtuous? The more she was so, the farther would such a mother be removed from her thoughts. She conjured her to think a little, and, if it was possible to reconcile Mr. Dalling, and to try, by a series of domestic duties and exemplary conduct, to obliterate the remembrance of her guilt.

This conversation made a great impression on her, who never thought beyond the present moment. She owned that Mr. Dalling was a good husband, though of too domestic a turn for her; but if he could be brought to forgive her, she would endeavour to atone for her indiscretion. She added that she left home only a few hours before she came to the inn.

Mrs. Gower rang to beg that Mr. Gower would come to her, when the mistress of the house said that the gentlemen

tlemen were none of them in the house, and she greatly feared that they were gone out on no good errand.

This greatly alarmed Mrs. Gower, and Mrs. Dalling also ; but Mrs. Gower recollected that her father was of the party, and could scarcely believe that, having so severely suffered from a late duel, he could be present and give his countenance to another.

It was not long before her suspense was at an end. The parties, to avoid interruption, had repaired to another inn in the same town. Mr. Dalling having brought pistols with him in his chaise, the Duke of Denbeigh, who had trampled on all the laws of hospitality, had nothing to say either in vindication or extenuation of his conduct ; nor if he had, would Mr. Dalling have listened to him ; for no sooner was the door of the room shut, than he presented a pistol to the Duke, saying if he
was

was unprovided he might use that, and instantly defend himself. Both Mr. Gower and Mr. Jeffreys attempted to interfere, but in vain. They both fired, when the Duke received a wound in his right arm, which disabled him from firing again.

Mr. Dalling said that he did not want to take the life of such a worthless being, but thus much was due to his injured honor. He should now endeavour to banish a worthless woman from his thoughts, and left the room.

Mr. Gower and Mr. Jeffreys, after sending for proper medical assistance to attend the Duke, who had fainted from loss of blood, and was supported by the master of the house, who came into the room on the report of the pistols, did the same.

The gentlemen enquired for Mr. Dalling on their return, supposing that he had returned back to the inn at which
he

he had alighted. No one had either seen or heard of him there; and on farther enquiry, it was found that he had retired to another room in the same house, where he ordered a chaise to be got ready. Whilst this was doing, he wrote the following short letter to Mrs. Gower:

“ Madam,

“ How I chanced to have the honour of meeting Mrs. Gower on the present melancholy occasion, I am at a loss to conjecture. I consider it fortunate for the unprincipled woman, whom I can no longer think of but with the deepest regret and horror. *See her again I never will*; but as I shall be constantly reminded of her existence by my lovely and unconscious child, I would not reproach myself with acting with cruelty to her mother, however unworthy. To your kind interference, Madam, I look
with

with confidence. Place her in any situation that you please, and call on me for her establishment in whatever plan may seem best to you. She has forfeited your esteem, I know; but you once, like myself, loved her; therefore I judged, from the natural benevolence of your disposition, you will assist in the support, though you cannot raise the fallen.

“ I go now to weep over my deserted infant, and to endeavour to make up to her the loss she has sustained by the abandonment of her mother, who ought to have watched over her opening mind, and to have implanted and cultivated in it those principles of virtue and honour that I now believe were never inherent in her own. Adieu, my dear madam.—Believe me, though deeply afflicted,

“ Yours unalterably,

“ GEORGE DALLING.”

This

This letter was delivered to Mrs. Gower, whilst sitting by the bedside of the wretched Caroline, who had been carried thither on being informed of the duel and its termination.

Mrs. Gower read over and over, with many tears, the sentiments of a justly offended husband, and could not but own the sentence he had pronounced was a mild one, considering the cause. She yet hoped to bring about a reconciliation, provided that Mrs. Dalling was sensible of the enormity of her conduct, and continued in a long course of repentance and reformation. Mrs. Gower told her, the letter in her hand was from Mr. Dalling. She begged to hear it read, and seemed deeply penetrated with the sentiments expressed by her husband. She owned that it was the attentions and flattery of the Duke that had prevailed on her to abandon so good a man ; that
the

the Duke had persuaded her, that her husband did not treat her properly; and that she would, if she did not exert herself, be immured at Bentley Abbey, the remainder of her days.—He proposed, after acknowledging a violent passion for her, that she should put herself under his protection, when he would make her Duchess of Denbeigh. She said, that she had deliberated long on his proposal, which he had urged her over and over again to accede to. She remonstrated with Mr. Dalling on his remaining always at the Abbey, declaring that she would spend the ensuing winter in London, whether he did so or not. He declared, if she persisted in this, he would never live with her again. After some very high words, they parted. This conversation she had related to the Duke, who made his own comments upon it, not to the advantage of Mr. Dalling, whom

he represented as a brutal and selfish husband, who would daily become worse and worse. He urged his own suit too successfully; and the unfortunate victim of his arts was prevailed on to quit an affectionate husband, and an innocent offspring, to throw herself into the arms of vice and infamy. As soon as the Duke had got her consent to elope, he dispatched his servant to the next post town, with orders to repair to a cross-road, about two miles from the Abbey, where they were taken up, as before related. They were not many miles from Bentley Abbey before Mr. Dalling was apprised of their departure. One of the grooms, returning from the post-house with letters, saw them get into the chaise, and gave the first intimation of the affair.—Dalling lost not a moment, but instantly pursued them.

What

What was to be done with the unfortunate victim of her own folly, Mrs. Gower could not devise. She determined from the first, not to abandon her ; for she recollected a promise to this effect, that she had made her either at school or soon after leaving it ; though she never believed that she should witness her in so degraded a state.

Mrs. Dalling was in such a state of mind, that it was impossible to expect she should be able to decide on the best step to pursue in this, her present dreadful situation. She talked of going to Bentley Abbey, and forcing her way to the presence of her offended husband, and dying at his feet if he refused to receive her. This, and many other projects equally silly and improper, she started and abandoned.

However, Mrs. Gower, after consulting with her husband and father, what was best to be done, determined

to return with her to the vicarage in Northamptonshire, and to endeavour to prevail, if possible, on the good Rector and his Lady, to receive her for the present, and to use their endeavours to work a reform in her sentiments ; when they had some faint hope, as nothing more criminal than intention had passed, after a series of good conduct, and a deep sense of the impropriety of her past ungrateful return to the best of husbands, he might be induced to pardon, and receive her again, for the sake of his lovely child, who perhaps might join her entreaties to theirs, to effect this happy termination of her sorrows.

Mrs. Dalling thankfully accepted the proposed asylum, though she would much rather have gone with Mrs. Gower to Holmby. She might herself have readily been induced to have taken her thither ; but she did not think

think it proper so far to outrage society, as to give an avowed sanction to infidelity. She pitied, and would protect her early friend ; more she did not think allowable in her situation.

The next morning Mr. Gower enquired, and found that the Duke was likely to do well, though he would lose the use of his arm. He was glad of this intelligence on Mr. Dalling's account, as he considered that the Duke merited even death for his base conduct.

They set off the next morning, and reached the vicarage house, where they surprised Mr. and Mrs. Jeffreys by their so sudden return. Their son related to them the cause, and requested them to receive the unhappy Lady in question, well knowing if they consented, that she would find much benefit in such society ; and though they could never restore her to the good

opinion of the world, or to the approbation of her own conscience, yet her mind might be brought round, so as to hope for forgiveness, where contrition and real penitence would not be pleaded in vain.

How many a wretched female might be snatched from destruction, were there many such characters as Mrs. Gower, who, truly virtuous themselves, dared to shield from further ruin the unfortunate and deluded of their own sex. Instead of which conduct, by continually pointing the finger of scorn towards the unhappy victims of credulity, they are driven from crime to crime, until they sink, without hope or pity, into an untimely grave.

After staying a week longer at the vicarage, during which time Mrs. Gower omitted nothing that could soothe or alleviate the sufferings of
Mrs.

Mrs. Dalling, they set off on their return to Holmby.

Much rejoicing was made, when it was known that Mrs. Gower's father, and the husband of their beloved Lady Laura, was at the lodge, and that Mr. Jeffreys meant to settle amongst them. Besides, they had learnt that an addition of twenty thousand pounds was added immediately to the fortune of Mr. Gower by Mr. Jeffreys, besides the natural expectancy of the succession to all his wealth. No person rejoiced more sincerely than the good Dr. Jackson and his Lady at the happy termination of Mrs. Gower's fortune.

The morning after their arrival, Mrs. Gower waited on Mrs. Allright, to enquire after her and the family, and to relate to her the story of the unhappy Caroline; to consult with her what was best to be done in future, in order, if

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possible,

possible, to effect a reconciliation. She found Mrs. Allright in bad health and spirits, and truly sorry for the situation of her for whom she could not but feel an interest.

She lamented the shocking depravity of the present times, and the ready and easy access that men of intrigue had to the society of virtuous females, after having rendered one of their own sex wretched for life, and perhaps destroyed the peace of many respectable families. She said she had often thought that it was to the ladies that the protection of their own sex naturally belonged; that it did not depend on the point of a sword, or the ball of a pistol; let it be understood that a seducer, once known as such, was for ever banished from the society and parties of respectable females, and this would operate, she was persuaded, more effectually than any decree of damages in a court of law.

Mrs.

Mrs. Gower gave her ready assent to this opinion, and wished that she was of consequence sufficient to set the example, and make the experiment.

Mr. Allright was very happy to see Mr. Jeffreys and Mr. Gower, to whom he related all his grievances, occasioned by the embarrassments of Lord Clifden, and the extravagance of both his daughter and himself. He said, that unless something was done, they must be ruined; for that the mortgage of the Clifden estate, would be foreclosed in a very few days. That all credit was at a stand, and in short, nothing but want, the natural consequence of such folly and dissipation, stared them in the face.

Mr. Jeffreys heard this with much attention; he could not but lament that so respectable and ancient a family, was likely to be sunk and lost. He said that this should not be, if he was certain

tain that the Earl, for whom his daughter expressed a regard, would but consider and endeavour to retrench his expences, and confine them, in future, within the limits of his fortune. Mr. Gower and he would consult together on their return home, and that if Mr. Allright would dine at the Lodge the next day, they would endeavour to devise some mode of extrication for the Earl.

This readiness in Mr. Jeffreys to assist Lord Clifden, and to save the Alderman's purse, was most grateful to him; for he had himself determined not to let them sink entirely.

Mrs. Gower was made happy by Miss Allright, who told her, that, provided no more daughters were found to inherit Lord Delmore's fortune, her Ladyship had at last determined to reward Frank with the hand of Miss Delmore, and that the Banker had resolved

solved to quit business, and to resign the banking-house and its concerns into the hands of their brother. She also informed Mrs. Gower, that their neighbour, Mrs. Lavington, had gone to the Continent with a young Irish adventurer of twenty-five.

The next day Mr. Allright came to Holmby, when a proper arrangement was made to save the Clifden estate, and to relieve the Earl's embarrassments, after which, the two families spent a very happy day together. Dr. and Mrs. Jackson were of the party.

In the evening, they were unexpectedly joined by Frank Allright, who came from Berkshire, and brought the agreeable news, that Lady Delmore had consented to his union with her daughter, in consequence of her declared resolution never to give her hand to any one else ; and evident signs that her health would suffer from a longer denial. The
Banker

Banker too had been very liberal in his proposals, which had greatly accelerated the negotiation.

Mr. Allright brought letters to both families from Lady and Miss Delmore, requesting their presence on that day week, which was fixed for the celebration of the nuptials.

Dr. Jackson was requested to accompany them and perform the ceremony. Many and hearty were the congratulations of all friends present on the happy occasion.

The intermediate time was spent in family arrangements; as the Gowers had not hitherto been able to form any plans of future domestic economy and comfort; to which they looked forward with much satisfaction and confidence.

Mr. Jeffreys had now attained to the summit of all his wishes, and spent his time in contributing to the perfection of many and numerous plans which tended

tended towards the good of his fellow creatures, and in contemplating the virtues of his deceased wife, reflected in the conduct of her daughter, who never, in her days of prosperity, lost sight of the little dependant at Mrs. Linworth's school at Harrowby, and though she had little to be grateful to her governess for, yet she made her a handsome present in token of remembrance of past times.

The Miss Allrights began to despair of gaining Right Honourable Lovers, as their father declared his intention of fixing at the Grove House for the remainder of his life, as soon as he had been once more to London and settled all affairs, so as to put Frank into the firm in St. Mary Axe. They now thought that it was better to accept of the offers of two sober Citizens than remain spinsters for ever. This they signified to their father, who greatly ap-
proved

proved their decision, and promised, on his return to town, to endeavour to bring matters about ; of the success of which he did not at all despair ; though, to be sure, they had, he said, tossed up their heads a little too high, but as he could toss a few pounds into the opposite scale, why there was no fear that they would lead apes in a certain place.

All the Ladies were hurt at, was, that a number of Misses, whom they had overlooked when with their sister Clifden, would now take place of them. Besides, it was so shocking to live in the vile city. They hoped to be able to wheedle their husbands, at least, as far towards the west end, as Bedford Square, where a nest of opulent Tradesmen were already in the act of forgetting trade, and all its incumbrances, and playing at the farce of announcing routs, fêtes, and balls, in competition with the first nobility, whose carriages they
had

had formerly attended to recommend the produce of their different warehouses.

The happy time at length arrived, when all parties repaired to Berkshire, and were witnesses of the union of Miss Delmore and Frank Allright, whose natural good nature, and manly conduct, and protection of his lady, met with the desert so well merited.

After witnessing the happy union of Mr. and Mrs. Francis Allright, and being themselves instrumental in raising the fallen fortune of the Earl of Clifden, who promised not to forget the lesson he had learnt in adversity, Mr. Jeffreys sat down at Carleton with his son and daughter.

One heart and mind, one soul, seemed to pervade the whole family. Their splendid fortune was expended in the most beneficial and most splendid manner; not in pomp and ostentation, but in the encouragement of every project
for

for the public good, and every talent and virtue. At the same time that this truly amiable and respectable family, were prone to relieve distress, they were anxious, by the promotion of industry of every kind, to prevent it. They exhibited in their conduct a conspicuous proof and illustration, that the Pride of Ancestry, which, though certainly allied to many virtues, sometimes leads to injustice, is secondary to real worth and rectitude of principle; in which alone true nobility consists.

While Lord Clifden reflected on the extreme folly of family pride and dissipation, an opportunity was presented of reflecting, also, on the value of wealth fairly acquired, in the hands of men, who, by good dispositions, and a liberal education, are capable of truly enjoying it.

THE END.

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